

HUNTING THE HUN

JAMES
BELTON
AND
E.G.
ODELL



Class D640

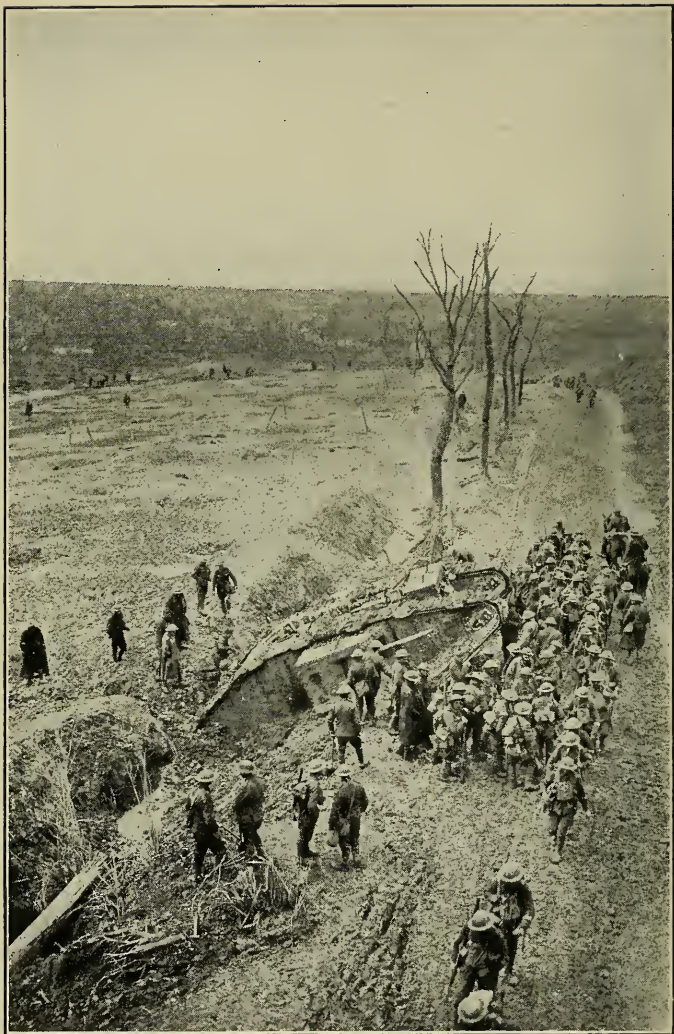
Book B486

Copyright N^o _____

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.



HUNTING THE HUN



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

ROADSIDE SCENE ON THE BRITISH SECTION OF THE
WESTERN FRONT

HUNTING THE HUN

BY

CAPTAIN JAMES BELTON

LATE OF THE BRITISH AND CANADIAN FORCES

AND

LIEUTENANT E. G. ODELL

LATE OF THE 24TH CANADIAN BATTALION, B.E.F.



ILLUSTRATED

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY

NEW YORK

LONDON

1918

Price: \$1.50 net

7640
B486

COPYRIGHT, 1918, BY
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY

© 3A492898

Printed in the United States of America

JUL 29 1918

FOREWORD

Captain Belton and Lieutenant Odell's book of the war will be read with deep and sustained interest by everyone who wants to understand "the real thing." For myself I confess to being thrilled by the simple, direct, conversational style of the chapters describing the preparations for the attack on and ultimate capture of Vimy Ridge. The complete absence of any attempt at word-painting, the little touches of actuality, such as the pattern of white tapes on the practice ground which showed the conformation of the German trenches, and the method of signalling to the contact aeroplane during an advance—these features are at once novel and arresting. The story is told with the terseness of a despatch. You see the battalion gathering for its deadly work after the training is done; you plod with it in Indian file along the Aux Reitz communication trench; you sprawl with the officers and men in the "jumping-off" trench; you wonder whether the missing jar of rum will turn up in time, and, finally, you go "over the top" with what amounts to a sigh of relief that the ghastly period of waiting has ended and that the "Zero Hour" will mark either the end or the beginning of a strangely

FOREWORD

heroic experience. It is quite remarkable that a plain soldier should be able to give such life to his story. The achievement is a tribute to realism. Here is the truth, and nothing but the truth, so you accept every word for what it is worth, and are even glad to be spared the fine touches of the skilled literary hand.

I am sure Captain Belton and Lieutenant Odell's book will be appreciated by a wide circle of readers in this country. A Canadian battalion and an American battalion must be close akin whether on the parade ground or in the battlefield. As these boys from Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg have done in France so will the boys do who hail from New York, Chicago, and the Far West. For that reason, and for many others quite as obvious, the appearance of this personal record of scenes and events in the Great War is peculiarly timely just now. I read the proofs at a sitting, and that, I know, is a certain test of the value of any book, be it grim fact or enticing fiction.

LOUIS TRACY.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK . . .	13
II. THE ATTACK	31
III. THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND . . .	72
IV. WE MOVE FORWARD	86
V. HUNTING THE HUN	101
VI. TRENCH ROUTINE	127
VII. BEHIND THE LINES	157
VIII. THE BULL RING	171
IX. THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A. .	190
X. SOME TRENCH SONGS	204
XI. BITS OF WAR	214
XII. TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB . . .	247
XIII. TIPS FOR RECRUITS	263

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Roadside scene on the British section of the Western front <i>Frontispiece</i>	✓
Bringing up wire for a night working party .	39 ✓
Going his last round at night. All is well in the support line	65 ✓
A dog used to carry messages in the trenches .	121 ✓
A tank in action	143 ✓
Bayonet exercise at a training ground Some- where in France	181 ✓
Releasing a pigeon with a message for help .	243 ✓
How the tanks are parked in the tankdromes .	255 ✓

HUNTING THE HUN

CHAPTER I

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

WHEN we make an attack on the Boche, we don't double over No Man's Land with bayonets fixed, shouting and cheering and making a terrible din. To be sure, the bayonet plays an important part in this great war as a weapon of warfare, but it is only used when you get to close quarters. While a man has any cartridges left in his magazine, he is not likely to use the bayonet.

A successful attack requires a great deal of preparation. Every detail has to be gone over very minutely, and every officer and man must know exactly what he has to do and be prepared to take all the chances and risks that go to make an attack successful.

HUNTING THE HUN

A great deal of the enemy's barbed-wire entanglements must be cut down by means of constant artillery fire, which for days shells their wire and trenches. When the artillery has completed its work the infantry is told to be prepared to go "over the top."

Each arm of the service is assigned a share in the work in the "Big Push." The engineers have various duties to perform, such as the planning and building of roads to allow the guns to move up with the advance of the infantry. In this work they are assisted by the pioneer and labour battalions.

The army service corps looks after the rations, supplies, etc., working in conjunction with the ammunition columns and other branches of the service. We have, therefore, a true coöperative spirit, each branch doing its share of duty in its own particular way.

The infantry is the queen arm of the service and the most important one. All other arms of the service are aids to assist it. In this great war, good artillery support is essen-

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

tial. On March 15, 1917, I arrived back to my battalion from a course of instruction that I had been attending at Pernes, which is one of the many schools of instruction where officers and men are sent for special courses. I located my battalion after considerable trouble at Masnil Bouche, a small village.

I reported to the commanding officer of the battalion who assigned me to No. 2 Platoon of "A" Company. It was raining as usual—it seems to rain in the northern part of France every day from the middle of October until the early part of April. My company commander brought me over to my billet, which was an old-fashioned, low roof stone house. It was occupied by an old woman and two of her daughters who kept an *estaminet* for the benefit of the troops, and incidentally a source of income for themselves.

We entered the doorway and passed along a passageway to the rear of the house leading to a room about ten feet square. Until the morning of April 8th six officers slept in this

HUNTING THE HUN

small place. It also served the purpose of officers' company mess room, and some of the junior officers of "B" Company joined our mess on account of lack of accommodations, as there were only a few available houses in Masnil Bouche.

The room had one double bed, which the company commander and second in command of "A" Company occupied. The junior officers slept on the stone floor. Our kitchen was outside in what might have once been a chicken coop, adjoining the house, not many yards from the window of our room, through which our meals were served. The kitchen could not even boast of a stone floor—underfoot was nothing but MUD, MUD, MUD!

I was very glad to meet my brother officers as they came in for dinner that night. It is usual in France to have individual company mess, but as previously mentioned, being cramped for accommodation, "B" Company's junior officers had joined our mess.

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

We were a very merry group, everyone in excellent spirits, which reminded me of a little song that we all hum in France: "A Merry Life, but a Short One." Two of the very officers who dined at our mess were killed at Vimy Ridge on April 9th.

The following morning at 9 A.M., "A" Company was drawn up in close column of platoons, in fighting order, ready for company inspection. It was raining slightly and very muddy underfoot. The men were equipped as they would be to go "over the top."

Only three platoons were drawn up for company inspection. It is customary for one platoon per company, each in its turn, to remain out of the line. These platoons with their officers form the nucleus of a new battalion in case the battalion meets with heavy losses while in the trenches. They may also be called upon to reinforce their respective companies in the line.

After each platoon had been carefully inspected by their respective platoon com-

HUNTING THE HUN

manders, and then by the company commander, we were marched off to our training ground, a distance of one kilometre, where there was an extensive stretch of open ground.

When we reached our training area, we saw hundreds of yards of white tapes two inches wide, stretched out before us. These tapes represented to us the outline of the German trenches which we were to attack and capture on Vimy Ridge. They lay on the ground in exactly the same position that we would later find the German trenches.

A tape was laid to represent our battalion jumping-off trench. When I reached my platoon's position in the jumping-off trench I halted and formed line. We were then supposed to be in a shallow trench, two and one-half feet wide by four feet deep. For practice purposes the "Zero Hour" was ten A.M. A few minutes before ten o'clock, a runner (this is a man whose special duty is to carry messages) gave me a message from my company commander that we would make the

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

practice attack and go "over the top" at two minutes past "Zero Hour"—that is, two minutes past ten o'clock. .

Our artillery was to lay a barrage on the first line of presumed German trenches at the same moment. A barrage is simply a moving wall of shell fire, which precedes the troops, who advance beneath the trajectory of the shells. We were to keep within fifty yards of our barrage in diamond formation. This barrage was indicated by men on the right and left flanks of our battalion frontage, which was a lateral distance of 335 yards.

Our battalion furnished four waves, each wave having its own mission to accomplish—the whole battalion having one final objective.

Men with flags would continue waving them until the barrage was supposed to lift, then they would double forward and indicate by their flags where the barrage was then falling.

I was in the first wave, commanding No. 2 Platoon. The first and second waves, composed of "A" and "B" Companies, went

HUNTING THE HUN

through until they reached the final objective. The "moppers up" came next and stopped and mopped up each trench in succession. We advanced in diamond formation, then extended as we arrived within 50 yards of our barrage. When the barrage had lifted, we advanced in extended order, and made a rush for the presumed German trenches, with the idea of surprising the Germans before they could get out of their dugouts. Each succeeding wave acted in a like manner, until our battalion obtained its final objective. We had four trenches to capture. The fourth German trench was our battalion's final objective and was named the *Zwischen Stellung* Trench.

As the waves went "over the top" they were accompanied a short distance in the rear by some Stokes guns under the command of the brigade Stokes gun officer. These Stokes guns were trench mortars, of short range, but very fast firing guns. The shells are simply dropped down the muzzle of the gun and are discharged as they strike the base. They can

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

do very good work, but to satisfy their appetite when they start going in earnest, it requires a great number of shells.

Our first objective was a trench called the "Fringe Trench," and after we had captured this we then moved forward under our barrage. When it lifted we took our second objective, which was the Furze Trench. Our barrage lifting again, we advanced from the furze trench and captured a German support trench which had been dug by them recently. After capturing this trench, we then proceeded and captured our final objective, the *Zwischen Stellung*. On reaching the *Zwischen Stellung* trench I was detailed with my platoon to bomb and to clean out any Germans I would find in part of a trench called the *Grenadier Graben*, which was from the intersection at the *Zwischen Stellung* to the Lens-Arras road at right angles, which, of course, was beyond our battalion's final objective by 150 yards. Then I had to retire and dig in with my company some distance in front of the *Zwischen Stellung*.

HUNTING THE HUN

As each objective was gained by us, men were detailed to mark it with a signpost that was driven into the ground on top of the parapet. On this signpost was a yellow coloured tin square decorated with the Maple Leaf in black.

A contact patrol aeroplane was assigned to our brigade for the purpose of reporting successes to General Headquarters some distance in the rear. Our signallers had red shutters on a white cloth background, and by means of cord and elastic bands they signalled to our contact aeroplane.

Our aeroplane hovered over us at a comparatively low elevation. Its work was certainly very dangerous as it was liable to get in the way of the trajectory of the shells both from the enemy and ourselves. Our signallers had instructions not to delay an instant sending the required signals. The contact patrol aeroplanes are slow-going machines as a rule. Ours was distinguished by two long streamers attached to struts of the wings of the

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

machine. The observer is seen hanging over the side of the fuselage, tooting a Claxton horn in a series of dots and dashes, and watching every movement we make. He must circle around continually, as he cannot stop his aeroplane.

For three weeks we practised going over the tapes. On the night of the 6th of April, the officers were informed that our Brigadier General would be over to inspect the battalion on the morning of the 7th. We were pleased to inform our boys of this news, as we all knew that the visit of the Brigadier General meant we were to go in the line for attack very soon. Every officer and man was keyed up to concert pitch with excitement. We had no thoughts of death—we were to do a man's work in a man's way, and we were all eager for the fray. Many times we had observed the German front line trenches through our periscopes in daylight. At times we had raided small sectors of their front line trench at night, and this front line and the other

HUNTING THE HUN

trenches in the rear were soon to be captured and occupied by us.

That night, three officers and one hundred men were sent up the line to dig the jumping-off trench for our battalion. This trench was to be dug in No Man's Land a short distance in front of our front line trenches and well clear of our barbed-wire entanglements. The night before the attack we had to crawl out of our front line trenches, through our barbed wire, and then into this jumping-off trench and lie there until the "Zero Hour." The Germans did not dream we would be so near to them.

The morning of the seventh arrived, and with it our Brigadier General McDonnel. He was an excellent soldier, well-liked and respected by both the officers and men of his brigade. He took a great interest in the planning of this attack and gave good advice to both officers, N.C.O.'s and men. He then inspected the battalion which had been drawn up in mass formation. After inspection, he

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

complimented both officers and men on their soldierly bearing and smart appearance. He then outlined briefly the plan of attack and informed us that we would be going into the line (when we go into the trenches, we always say we are going into the line, whether it is the front, support or reserve trenches) the following night, April 8th. He requested that both officers and men should treat this information as confidential. Wishing every officer and man who were to participate in the attack the "best of luck," he told us that there was no doubt in his mind of our success in capturing Vimy Ridge. The men were then given the balance of the morning to spend as they saw fit around their billets.

In the afternoon the battalion fell in for church service, and most of us took communion—some for the last time on this earth. The scene was very impressive as our Padre or Chaplain read the service and rendered a very appropriate sermon for the occasion. Can you imagine what this sermon meant to those

HUNTING THE HUN

brave men out there on the battlefield? No mother, wife, sister or sweetheart should ever think that their men folk lose their religion when they go to war. Out there, we have a deep sense of religion which is entirely different from the religion of the folks at home. We all know what we have to face, and we strive to keep our mind and thought on the highest ideas of religious belief. The mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts of the brave men who fell at Vimy Ridge can be consoled by knowing that their men entered into the Kingdom of Peace prepared to meet their Maker. Their epitaph is, "They did their bit, and rest content."

Colonel, the Rev. Canon F. G. Scott, of the 1st Canadian Division, has been in the fighting zone since the 1st contingent arrived in France. Two of his own sons were fighting in the trenches, one of them was killed and the other wounded. Colonel Scott is a poet of considerable note and in April, 1917, he wrote "The

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

Silent Toast," in remembrance of the brave boys who fell in the attack on Vimy Ridge.

All the officers of the brigade who were to participate in the "Big Push" were invited over to Brigade Headquarters that evening by the Brigadier General. We were shown some aerial photographs of the German trenches that had been very recently taken, and given more minute details of the attack, with the information that the "Zero Hour" would be 5.30 A.M., and that the first wave was to go "over the top" at one minute past "Zero Hour." The reason that the first wave was to go over at one minute past "Zero Hour" was to give time to the barrage to play three minutes on the German front line. We thus had two minutes to work under the barrage before it lifted to the next objective. As it lifted, we would make a rush for our first objective and follow our barrage to within 50 yards. The "Zero Hour" was to be kept secret.

The General then gave us a history of Vimy Ridge, again telling us he was certain, on ac-

HUNTING THE HUN

count of the wonderful artillery support we would have, that we would gain all our objectives. How true his words were is now history.

Between the city of Arras, held by the French and British, and the city of Lens, held by the Germans, was Vimy Ridge which stretched north, west and southwest in front of the village of Vimy. Since 1914, the Germans had held it, resisting all Allied assaults. Its strategical importance was fully recognized by both the Allies and the Germans. Every artificial means had been taken to increase its natural strength, the best scientific devices of fortifications had been made use of by the Germans, and for two years it had defied all attacks.

The French vainly attacked it all through the month of December, 1914, and January, 1915. General Foch in May, 1915, delivered several attacks known as the Battle of Souchez. He gained a little ground on the lower slopes, but failed to weaken to any extent the

HOW WE PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK

Main Ridge. In September, 1915, while the British were making an attack around and near Loos, the French under General Foch once more attacked the Ridge. Again they failed. As long as the Germans retained Vimy Ridge, their line was secure in this quarter, so its retention allowed them to contemplate with a certain degree of equanimity withdrawals of troops from the line. On either side of the Ridge, it was flanked with Lens on the north, and Arras on the south—both cities under distant artillery fire.

The Canadian corps was working in conjunction with the Imperial troops, and the attack by the British troops, including the Canadians, extended from Givenchy-en-Gohelle to Henin-sur-Cojaul, an approximate distance of fifteen miles. The actual assault upon Vimy Ridge which was four to five miles long was entrusted to the Canadians. The forces engaged in this advance were to be commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Ed-

HUNTING THE HUN

mund Allenbury and Lieutenant-General H. S. Horne. The Canadians in the First Army Corps were under the command of Major-General Byng. He is now in command of the Third British Army with the rank of Lieutenant-General.

CHAPTER II

THE ATTACK

ON the morn of the 8th of April, reveille was sounded at 4:15 A.M. as everything had to be packed up. All the surplus kits were loaded on transport wagons. Every officer and man was busy looking after his personal effects and cleaning up the billets, for everything must be left in as good shape and order as when we moved in. The boys were in high spirits and glad of the opportunity to demonstrate again the quality of the New World troops. At about 9:00 A.M. the bugle sounded and the battalion fell in. Each platoon was carefully inspected. Our acting commanding officer, Major R——, spoke a few words to the whole battalion, telling us that we would uphold all traditions of the Canadian Army, and that he was sure our battalion

HUNTING THE HUN

would prove to be one of the best in France. He felt certain we would gain all our objectives. He then wished us the "best of luck" and, as it was his turn to remain out of the line, he handed the command over to the acting second in command of the battalion, Major M——.

It was a bright day and the roads had commenced to dry up. For a short distance, our battalion marched along making very slow progress, as the highway was being used by motor transports, most of them carrying ammunition for the "Big Push." Behind a few of these there were some big guns, ever coming forward. The road was alive with excitement—the very atmosphere reeked with it. Every one felt the crisis was at hand. As we moved slowly along the road in detachments of platoons in columns of fours, or two deep, our progress was in consequence extremely slow. Our guides had been sent out to find out the best cross-country road to reach our brigade assembling point. Each platoon had

THE ATTACK

its own guide. We were led by them off the main road across country to the eastern slope of Mount St. Eloi which we reached at noon of the same day.

We halted and took off our equipment to await for dusk. Other platoons were continually arriving. The men had their dinner, and then made themselves as comfortable as possible, some went to sleep and others wrote letters, many for the last time.

By four in the afternoon battalions of our brigade and of other brigades had arrived and were thickly scattered along the slope of Mount St. Eloi. Some bands were playing. A short distance away from us at the foot of Mount St. Eloi a large Y. M. C. A. marquee was being well patronised by our boys. After the various brigade bands would stop playing, I could hear faintly the soft tones of the Y. M. C. A. organ mingled with the voices of the boys singing a hymn.

We had our supper at 6 P.M. and again inspected our platoons most carefully. The

HUNTING THE HUN

gas helmets had to be examined thoroughly to see that they were in perfect condition, that the goggles were not cracked or broken and that the gas fumes could not penetrate through any part of the mask. All the officers' watches were carefully synchronised from brigade time. The small box respirator was put on in the alert position. Every man had to show that he had his iron rations and extra rations to last for two days.

After inspection, it was fast approaching dusk. At 7:45 P.M. we formed up and moved off in detachments of platoons at distances of 100 yards.

We marched up the slope of Mount St. Eloi. A little over half way, we came to a bush road. This we followed until we reached the main road. This road led us through part of the badly shelled little town of Mount St. Eloi. As we reached the top of the summit, on the right of the road could be seen the ruins of the church and monastery of Mount St. Eloi. The monastery had been founded by

THE ATTACK

St. Eloi in the year six hundred and forty and reconstructed in the eighteenth century. Previous to the present war, only the facing walls of the church were standing, but the Germans demolished these walls by shell fire as well as the surrounding buildings, formerly occupied by the clergy and civilians. Mount St. Eloi Church, a very prominent object on the landscape, we had used for an observation post.

It was now 8:30 P.M. and quite dark. We started to descend the slope. As I looked ahead of me, I could see the German white flares, also their green and red rockets going up, and could see the bursting of the shrapnel and its flash, and hear the thunder of both ours and the enemy's artillery.

It was an awe-inspiring spectacle. To the right of the road the ammunition column men on mules were hauling to the various artillery dumps large and small shells, fodder for hungry guns that were to give us victory the next day. As we passed these men they wished

HUNTING THE HUN

us the "best of luck," shouting some friendly remarks such as "We are working like h—— for you boys; see that you give Fritz h—— to-morrow!"

We left the main road and started across open fields until we reached at right angles the Arras-Bethune road, directly opposite was the entrance of the Aux Rietz communication trench. A few hundred yards to our left, along the Arras-Bethune road stood once the little village of La Targette, and on the opposite side, Neuville St. Vaast. Now nothing remained but masses of fallen masonry caused by the continuous bombardments both by the Allies when these towns were occupied by the Germans, and then by the Huns when they were driven back, and the Allies occupied them.

The Aux Reitz communication trench was what we called an ingoing communication trench. The leading platoon had started up the communication trench—my platoon came next. As I was crossing the road at the head

THE ATTACK

of my platoon, now in single file, I formed a mental picture of what I saw before me. It was about 10 P.M. and pitch dark. Our shells were bursting in the German trenches and wire entanglements. On our right forward flank, the Germans were signalling by means of green rockets. They were an exceedingly pretty and spectacular display of fireworks, as these green rockets would go up and, after attaining a certain height, they would burst and a tail of green stars would appear.

The Germans very often use their golden spray rocket for the S.O.S. signal, but they are liable to change from time to time, as is also our habit.

Here and there I could see fires where the German ammunition dumps had been blown up by our shell fire. Then I would suddenly hear the quick hissing sound of German shells upon our right and left flanks along the Arras-Bethune road. The Huns were shelling our back area.

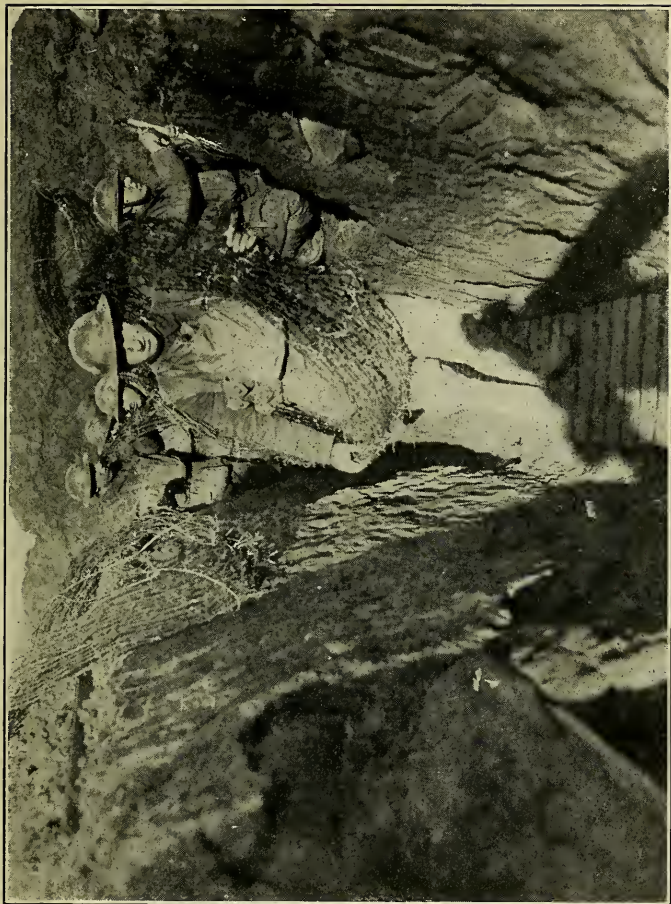
Our battalion scout officer, Lieutenant

HUNTING THE HUN

B——, who had preceded us, was directing each platoon from the top of the communication trench, past the various intersections of the C. T.* Lieut. B—— was very much exposed and in a more dangerous position than any of us who were in the trench, but he did not seem to mind it. I could hear above me the swish, swish, swish of the German shells and the rat-tat-tat of their machine guns. As the machine gun bullets struck the top of the trench above us, small clods of earth would fall in our midst.

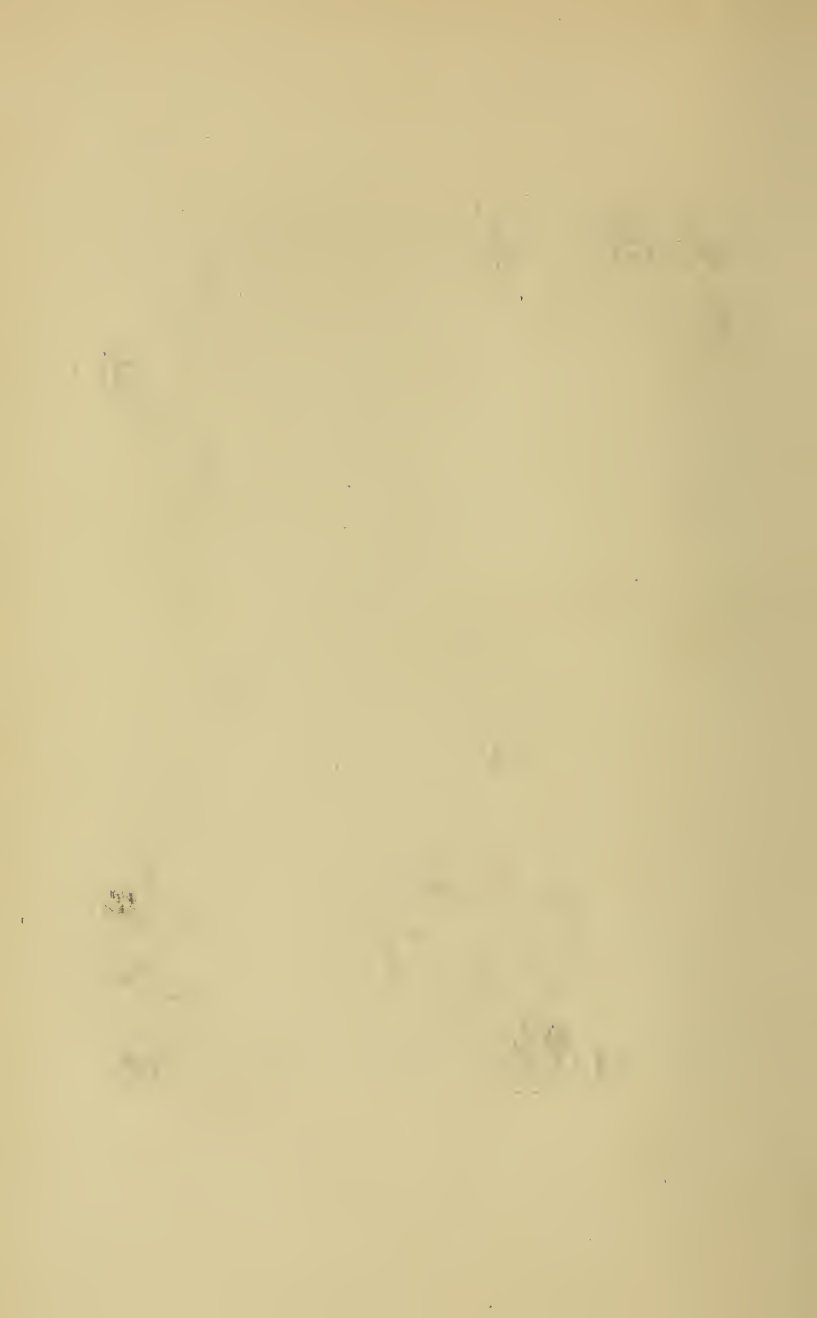
As previously mentioned, the Aux Reitz communication trench had a regular maze of trenches branching off from it. At the intersection were signboards on which were painted the names of each trench and where they led to. Quite a number of the trenches were without these signboards. They had probably been knocked off the side of the trench in some manner. Nevertheless, our scout officer guided us correctly in the intense darkness.

*Communication trench.



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

BRINGING UP WIRE FOR A NIGHT WORKING PARTY



THE ATTACK

Our C. T. was about seven feet deep in some places and five feet wide, but this varied. It was the usual zig-zag formation. Under our feet in some places were trench mats.*

We had proceeded up the communication trench for some 300 yards when word was passed along to me from the rear to double in front, as the entrance of the communication trench was being shelled by the Huns and that there were some casualties due to the congestion. As the whole brigade was coming up in single file and each man had to run across the exposed Arras-Bethune road to get into the communication trench, they were anxious to obtain the protection from shell fire that the trench would afford. I passed the word along to the platoon commander of No. 1 platoon, which had the desired effect. We started at a steady double march, bending under small culverts, through little rivulets of water, slipping and sliding over the muddy

* Trench mats are usually 8 feet long by $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad and are simply flooring boards about 2 inches broad which are nailed about two inches apart to a strong scantling 3 x 3 inches thick.

HUNTING THE HUN

trench mats when we found them under our feet. Ofttimes we would suddenly find ourselves up to our hips in muddy water.

A considerable number of telephone wires crossed our C. T. Some sagged and were in line with our faces. In the darkness they were hard to see, and if one was unfortunate enough to get caught by the wire under his chin he would have good cause to remember it. Word was being continually passed along as obstacles were encountered, such as, "Wire overhead," "Wire underfoot," "Step down," "Step up," etc. This information was appreciated by those in the rear. After doubling for about 500 yards, word was passed along to me that the "line was broken." This meant that we had left behind us some of the boys who could not run as fast as those in front. This usually happens to the section of Lewis gunners who have their gun equipment to carry, which is much heavier than what the men have to carry in the other sections. We therefore had to halt for a few minutes until

THE ATTACK

they caught up to us. At last we reached the end of our trench. To the right and left, we could see the boys on sentry duty, holding the front line trench. On the fire step men were sitting or lying down trying to get a few minutes' sleep. These were the men who had to hold the front line trenches at all costs. We were what is commonly known as the "storming troops."

By the time we had reached the front line trenches, approximately 300 yards from the German front line, their white flares were going up in profusion, and while these flares were up, it was almost as light as day. We passed down the lines the usual caution, "Be sure when the flare light breaks to keep your body perfectly rigid and your face down as you go over No Man's Land to the jumping-off trench."

Someone passed the word from the rear that the jar of rum which is allotted to each platoon and which is usually in charge of the platoon commander had been

HUNTING THE HUN

ditched (thrown away). I looked around for my batman to whom I had entrusted it, and I was informed he had gone ahead over No Man's Land with Lieutenant B—— in order to select my position in the jumping-off trench. When last seen he had the jar of rum with him. The rum is usually given out at "stand to" both in the morning and evening, one hour before dawn and one hour before dusk. After being in the wet and cold, it both braces and stimulates the men.

While we were crouching and doubling over the ground from shell hole to shell hole, one after the other German white flares would go up and burst. We were seen by the Huns, who, probably thinking it might be a raiding party, turned their machine guns upon us. Those who happened to be outside of a shell hole fell flat, and awaited for orders. All this time our shells were dropping upon the German wire entanglements and front line trenches, which were then about 250 yards

THE ATTACK

away from where we were out in No Man's Land.

The German machine guns were searching out the whole of this territory. For fully one hour we were glued to the ground.

As the "Zero Hour" was 5.30 A.M. we had lots of time to reach the jumping-off trench, yet, I could overhear remarks in a low tone of voice about the rum. It was still worrying the men. They were quite used to the machine gun bullets, and their only thought was how they might be cheated by fate of a small tot of rum before going "over the top."

I was then in a shell hole that was very shallow. As I looked over the lip of it, I saw someone making his way in short rushes towards me. The man I saw was Lieutenant B——. He was trying to locate me amidst all the shell holes. I went over to meet him. He told me that everything was all right and that the battalion had only four casualties who were taken out of the line. He then gave me

HUNTING THE HUN

exact directions to my place in the jumping-off trench.

There was a lull in the firing at this time, so I passed the word behind to the boys to advance and follow me closely.

Just then, the Germans opened up with machine-gun fire, and word was passed up for the stretcher bearer. That meant a man wounded and at this time it was very awkward. I could not spare my stretcher bearer, as we were going to advance, and again I could not allow a wounded man to die for want of attention. Neither could I endanger the lives of the men in my platoon more than was necessary for that of one man. However, I pointed out to the stretcher bearer who had crawled from a shell hole near by, his location on the ground and gave him an idea where he would find our platoon in the jumping-off trench. I told him if the man could walk to give him first aid if necessary, but if he could not walk, to see that word would be passed back to the

THE ATTACK

firing line in the rear and have them send out stretcher bearers.

We crawled for a distance, and as there were no German white flares going up during this interval, we doubled up in a half crouching position until we reached and tumbled into our jumping-off trench. As I looked at my luminous watch, I noticed it was exactly midnight. We were packed like sardines in this little trench not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide by four feet. But that mattered not—we were nearing our goal.

I was reminded by the boys that they had not seen the rum carrier, my batman Lamb. I was also anxious to see him, so I passed the word along to my right and left flank that if anyone did see him, they were to tell him where I was located. A few minutes later, as a German white flare was sent up, I saw a figure crouching along the trench. It was Lamb, and under his arm he had the jar of rum. I heaved a sigh of relief, and Lamb at that particular moment was a very popular

HUNTING THE HUN

man. I could hear the boys passing the glad word down the line, "Good old Lamb has got the rum! Lamb's got the rum!"

I made room for Lamb to get beside me in the trench. The Huns then began shelling our front line trenches in the rear of us with "Minnenwerfers," "rum-jars," and "fish-tails." The latter are short range trench shells that have a high trajectory and make considerable noise when they explode. I could feel the hot air as they went over my head.

Our guns were shelling the German trenches, so that we were between both fires without any overhead protection. The Germans, never dreaming for a moment that we were so close to them, kept on shelling to the rear of us. They imagined we were still in the front line trenches. We carefully posted sentries and warned them to listen for any noise, such as hammering on the faucets of gas drums, as the wind was favourable for the Germans to attempt a gas wave attack.

I began to think how many of us would

THE ATTACK

come through this show, for I knew we had a tough proposition before us. I then remembered that my stretcher bearer had not returned, so I told my platoon sergeant to find out where he was. A little later, he appeared above the parados and got in beside us in the trench with his stretcher.

Too much praise cannot be given to the stretcher bearers. They are unarmed and many of them are killed. The moment a man is wounded, a stretcher bearer rushes to his assistance; no matter how heavy the bombardment may be, he is in the thick of the fight attending to the wounded and dying. All men in the ranks know the old familiar cry, "Stretcher bearer, stretcher bearer, on the double." Then we know it is blighty for someone; it may be a mere scratch, or it may mean death.

I had often gone over No Man's Land at night, and looked over it through my periscope in the daytime, but this was going to be my first time "over the top" in daylight. I did

HUNTING THE HUN

not feel afraid, yet I was naturally anxious as to what I should feel like, and also how my platoon would act under the ordeal. No man but one who has gone "over" can describe or try to make anyone realise the feeling. One wishes to get it over quickly; the time seems to drag until that moment, and then it seems to fly.

Suddenly, I was aroused from my reverie by a voice that sounded between us and our own firing line. I listened, and heard the same voice shout out these startling words, "Where in h—— is the end of this damned ditch?" The voice was clear and distinct and betrayed no sign of nervousness or fear. The Huns were strafing our front lines, we all knew he was not a soldier, therefore, he must be a civilian, and we wondered why he was out here. Then again he would have called a trench a trench, and not a ditch. I heard one of the boys say, "Well, he must have some nerve, whoever he is!" and then I heard another say, "I'm going to take a peep at the

THE ATTACK

man." Another said, "He may be a German spy." I could see it was up to me to do something, so I told my platoon sergeant to take charge and gave instruction to the men to keep their heads down below the parapet.

With my batman I cautiously proceeded in the direction of the voice. Just then, I saw a civilian with a steel helmet on his head and a small box respirator on his chest. He was about 30 yards away from me and appeared to be carrying a machine gun. I raised my Colt automatic pistol and was ready to fire; the batman had also drawn a bee-line on him with his rifle. I called to him to come forward with his hands up and to drop what I thought was his gun, or I would kill him. He shouted back, "Don't shoot, friend, don't shoot. I'm a moving picture man and an American; I am going to take moving pictures of you fellows as you go 'over the top' and get the Germans on the run. I feel quite proud to be with you boys."

I went over to the shell hole and, by the aid

HUNTING THE HUN

of my luminous prismatic compass and the flares of the Germans, I examined his papers and found them in order. It appeared that he had been following a battalion up the communication trench. As they started to double forward, he had been left behind. He was determined to see the show through and be in the thick of it, taking our pictures as we proceeded to advance with our barrage in the attack. He was certainly a very cool customer. Unarmed, he was taking all kinds of risks in order to take the pictures of the boys as they went over. He told me the battalion he was supposed to be with, so I gave him one of my men as a guide and told him where to go.

If this is a sample of the Americans who have gone over to France to fight with us, then all I can say is that the Boche will have a hard time when the boys from the United States of America go "over the top."

I returned to my place in the trench and told the boys about the movie man. It certainly amused them. Lamb in the meantime

THE ATTACK

commenced to dig with his entrenching tool foot holes in the trench for me. I noticed he had done the same thing for himself. All the other boys did likewise. This was to facilitate our getting out of the trench quickly at the last moment.

It was now four o'clock, still very dark, and I decided this was the best time to give the boys their tot of rum. This was welcome news indeed. It is the duty of every platoon commander to personally issue the regulation allowance of rum to each one of his men. As there was not sufficient room to allow passageway along the trench, my batman and I jumped out and worked our way along both flanks of the platoon. We served each man with his allowance of this beneficial fluid. I was glad when this task was over as it was slow work, and at any moment I expected we might be spotted by the Huns, especially as they were sending up large numbers of white flares. We had to assume all kinds of rigid, grotesque positions until the flares died out.

HUNTING THE HUN

The Huns are great on fireworks. It is very seldom we send up a white flare. The Huns seem to have an unlimited quantity. They give us all the light we require—very often too much. Their nerves are on edge, as they are in constant dread of our raiding parties. I was glad to get back to my place in the ditch, as the American called it.

I looked at my watch and noticed it was 5:20 A.M. It was raining slightly. Our boys in the front line were no doubt "standing to." German white flares were still going up, also a few of their green and red rockets. I passed the word down the trench to "fix bayonets."

I could faintly see the men near me. They seemed to be impatiently looking at their watches; daylight was fast approaching. I kept looking down at my watch; again as I looked up I noticed the men's faces. It was hard to make out the lines, but I could see that their lips were tightly drawn with grim determination to do their duty at all costs! I over-

THE ATTACK

heard a remark made by one of the men to his companion and it was, "If I don't come out of this show, Bill, tell my mother I died game!" His friend's reply was, "I will! If I don't, and you do, tell mine the same!" I felt a thrill of pride when I overheard those words which gave me an idea of the calibre of the men fighting with me.

I placed my whistle in my mouth, ready to blow, my pistol loaded and at the safety, ready to be used in a second if required.

Exactly at 5:30 we heard the swish, swish, swish of our shells pass over our heads on their journey of destruction and defeat to the front line of the Germans. I had trouble to make the boys wait the one minute that was necessary. Finally I blew my whistle, I knew they could not hear it, but I pointed in the direction of the enemy and everyone was "over the top" like a shot. I cannot describe how I felt. My blood ran quickly, my head seemed to throb, and my heart felt as if it was going to come through my chest.

HUNTING THE HUN

The screaming from the large number of shells that our artillery were firing over our heads was terrific. Our barrage was intense. No human being could live in that hell of fire. I saw the frantic appeals of the Germans who were sending up their S. O. S. signals, besides rockets of every colour of the rainbow.

But their appeal was too late. We had surprised them. No power on earth could save them; our barrage was perfect and we worked under it steadily. The training over the tapes was partly forgotten. We were eager to reach the Hun trenches; we were out for blood! God, how awful it seemed! Men fell around me gasping, sputtering; but we still moved on relentlessly.

When within fifty yards of the barrage, I signalled to the men to extend. I didn't know how many men I had lost. I saw my platoon sergeant fall just after we had gotten over the top. As they fell, other men took their places from other units. These men had lost

THE ATTACK

their officers and placed themselves under me. I directed them and we moved again.

Our barrage played four shells per minute on a lateral space of 20 yards. The intense bombardment in front of us sent German limbs, bodies and earth all sky high.

Then our barrage lifted to the German support trench, which was called the Fringe Trench. As our barrage lifted, we rushed forward, and immediately took our first objective. Here we halted for one minute to allow our barrage to play upon the Fringe Trench without exposing ourselves unnecessarily. This was in accordance with orders.

One of the men who joined my platoon from another battalion met in this trench an old schoolmate who was in my platoon. As they were close to me, I overheard the following dialogue as they shouted to one another:

My boy shouted to the other man, "Hello, Tom, what are you doing out here?"

The reply was: "I like to fight, Bill, as I always did when I was at school, and being a

HUNTING THE HUN

single man, I came out here to Hunt the Huns." On asking Bill what brought him out, he gave the startling reply that he was married. He had married a widow with a large family. He liked peace and he therefore came here to get it. Each of them had what he wished for!

We followed on until we were within fifty yards of our barrage, which had to play five minutes on this trench. At such a distance, the air is hot and oppressive. I signalled to the boys not to go too fast for fear of moving into our own shell fire. As the barrage lifted, we doubled and jumped into the Fringe Trench, our second objective. There was no opposition. Quite a number of German dead lay about the trench.

As we continued our advance from the Fringe Trench to gain our third objective, I noticed a German soldier advancing towards us. He appeared to be about 18 years of age, and had his steel helmet on. His gas mask box was thrown over his shoulder. He did

THE ATTACK

not appear to be armed and, as he advanced with his hands up I thought I heard him shout what I presumed to be "*Kamerad, Kamerad!*" How he escaped our barrage was a miracle. I passed him on to the rear.

Suddenly I was surprised to hear machine gun bullets strike the ground around me. Two of my boys fell face forward, wounded. We immediately all fell flat and I at once thought that someone had blundered. I naturally thought it might be possible that it was our own machine gunners, as we had not observed any machine gun emplacements as we advanced.

I cautiously crawled around on my stomach, and I saw not far in our rear the top of some German steel helmets. I knew at once that we had passed by and overlooked a German machine gun emplacement.

I divided the platoon into two sections. We crawled back to the right and left flank of this machine gun emplacement. Our moppers up, one company of the 22nd

HUNTING THE HUN

French Canadian Battalion, had not time to get to this point. When within striking distance, we fired a few rifle grenades and threw some bombs. Then all was silent from that quarter and we knew that the bombs had done the trick. I went over to this German machine gun emplacement. It was a "Mebu" type and our artillery had knocked the top off it. I found that we had exterminated the whole squad with the exception of the machine gun officer, who was badly wounded. He was half reclining and half kneeling on what was left of his machine gun. He struggled to his feet and came to attention as I reached him. He expected that we would shoot him, but we of the Anglo-Saxon race play the game fair. So I had him sent to the officer who had command of another company that had to look after prisoners. We had now lost time; we turned, doubled forward and gained our third objective. Our barrage had lifted for two intervals of 100 yards and was now playing upon

THE ATTACK

the *Zwischen Stellung* trench, our battalion's final objective.

We had now some distance to go. As we proceeded with our advance, I heard a loud shout from the boys, who excitedly pointed to the rear. But this time, it was with a feeling of relief that I saw four tanks looming up in the distance. They were firing away beyond us at the retreating Huns. Our barrage was still playing upon the *Zwischen Stellung* trench. We moved along quickly. I noticed the boys were coolly smoking cigarettes.

All at once the barrage lifted. We rushed for the German trench. This was the first time we had met with resistance from the Germans, but we had followed so closely to the barrage that we were upon them before they realised it. What little opposition we did have, we quickly brushed aside.

Finally, I located my objective, the *Grenadier Graben*. As I was proceeding up this trench with the men I had left, I heard some shouting. It seemed to come from the bowels

HUNTING THE HUN

of the earth. I looked on the side of the trench and then saw what appeared to be the entrance of a dugout. It was almost blocked by earth caused by our artillery fire. I got the men to cautiously clear away the earth and then heard the familiar cry of "*Kamerad, Kamerad!*" My knowledge of the German language is limited, but I knew this meant surrender.

Very soon we cleared the entrance and a German officer appeared. He spoke in German. As I did not understand German, I tried him in French. This language he spoke fluently. He held his hands up and I asked him to come out, which he did. He was an officer of the 263rd Bavarians, a tall, handsome man with blue eyes, fair hair, and a small fair moustache. He asked me if he could speak to an officer. I at that time was wearing a private's tunic with the insignia of my rank on my shoulders. I told him I was an officer.

Then he informed me that he wished to sur-

THE ATTACK

render himself and twenty-two men who were still in the dugout. He knew that resistance was useless. He told me that our barrage had been terrible, that their own salvation was to get into their dugout, but that he thought the Germans would get Vimy Ridge back again by June. He omitted to say in what year. He then handed me over his pistol, and also asked me if I would accept his binoculars as a souvenir, which I did. I then told him to tell his men to drop their firearms and to come out in single file with their hands up. As soon as we had them all searched, I turned them over to the officer in charge of prisoners who gave me a receipt for one officer and twenty-two men.

I heard later that they safely reached the prisoners' cage at La Targette, from where they would be sent to the usual detention camps. The moppers up had by this time reached a trench near by and I noticed that if the Huns did not surrender promptly, no chances were taken to allow them to act

HUNTING THE HUN

treacherously. A few Mills' bombs thrown down the German dugouts would soon do the work with the aid of the Lewis machine gun fire.

About 4 P.M. I commenced to dig a small narrow trench in front of the *Zwischen Stellung*. While the boys were digging, my corporal, now acting platoon sergeant, asked me if I would like a drink of hot coffee. I replied, "Yes," and at the same time said, "What is the use of asking me, when you know we could not get it on account of the attack." However, I was agreeably surprised to hear him say, "There is plenty of coffee, sir, enough to do the whole platoon if you are not afraid of being poisoned as it has been left by the Germans in one of their dugouts." I therefore asked an officer from a nearby platoon to keep in touch with my men and informed him I would be back in a few minutes, as everything was quiet at that time. Taking my batman and three men, I was led by my acting platoon sergeant around shell



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

GOING HIS LAST ROUND AT NIGHT. ALL IS WELL IN THE SUPPORT LINE

THE ATTACK

craters and shell holes to the *Zwischen Stellung* trench until we came to the mud-blocked entrance of a German dugout. We cleared away a little more of the mud. I noticed to the right of the entrance a large bell and a horn very much like a Claxton horn. These, no doubt, were sounded by the Huns when we made our gas wave attacks upon them.

We descended the staircase, which was at an angle of about 55 degrees, until we reached the bottom. There we came to a door with a sliding window. As we turned a brass door knob and pushed open the door, candles were burning on a desk and I saw a room about 12 feet square, which had a wooden floor, a neat little rug under the desk, a few chairs, a comfortable looking spring bed in the corner with the softest of woollen blankets. In another corner was a small stove with a well filled coal bin in the rear of it. A wash basin with running water, electric light fixtures, telephone, and the wooden walls were papered and burlapped. Over the desk was a picture

HUNTING THE HUN

of the Kaiser. In addition there were German spiked helmets and caps, uniforms, pistols, swords, binoculars, maps, one Iron Cross, postcards, magazines, newspapers.

In the drawer of the desk, I found a small Eastman Kodak, an English dictionary, and a large quantity of note paper engraved with the emblem of the Iron Cross. I presume the winners of the Iron Cross were allowed to use this kind of stationery. In addition, I found the photograph of an N.C.O. of the 263rd Bavarian Regiment. This man's body I subsequently found in a shell hole directly on top of his dugout. He had evidently fought to a finish, as his rifle lay by his side with magazine empty. His gas helmet was suspended by a strap from his shoulder. On his tunic was the Iron Cross Ribbon. This photograph and ribbon I have in my possession at the present time. Later on, when we buried the body, we found a small .22 calibre Colt automatic pistol fastened to his belt.

To the left of the staircase was another door

THE ATTACK

which led along a passageway, both sides of which had rows of bunks. With the aid of the candles we had, I could see that there were several other exits or entrances, similar to the one we had come down. As I could not make out any signs of daylight from above, I judged that the entrances had been blocked by the effect of our barrage.

As we neared what I then thought was the end of this passage, I saw some of the men of my battalion. They told me that they had permission to break away for an hour. These men were seated around a table having a good meal. They stood up as I approached. I told them to carry on.

The Germans had used this room as a dining-room. There were several German candles burning briskly on the table. To the right was a small kitchen. Here one of the boys was frying German bacon and eggs.

It was not long before I had a very good meal, a little of everything. In the German water bottles which were hung up along the

HUNTING THE HUN

walls we found cold coffee, the aroma of which as it was heated was something to be remembered. My menu consisted of bacon and eggs, jellied meat, sausage, cakes and candies. There was also wine, mineral waters, Spanish cigars and a large number of red packages of gold tipped cigarettes marked "Puck."

Needless to mention I brought a good feed back to my platoon.

This German dugout we marked by sticking a Hun rifle and bayonet upright on top of the parapet with a German steel helmet over the butt of the rifle. We could see it from some distance, otherwise it would have been very hard to have found this dugout again at that particular time, as the ground was simply one mass of shell holes. You could not place a table eight feet square anywhere in this locality where it would not slide into a shell hole. As the sergeant was making the landmark on the top of the dugout, I noticed the body of the Hun whose photograph I had. This dugout was named the "Berliner House." The

THE ATTACK

following day we made it our company headquarters. It accommodated all the men of our company who were not on duty.

As I looked at the bodies of the Germans who had been killed in the attack, I remarked that they were all clean shaven. Their equipment and uniforms were good and in first class condition. Large quantities of small arm ammunition done up in cloth bandoliers were nearby and large numbers of Mauser rifles lay here and there on the ground with the jetsam of the battlefield.

CHAPTER III

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

“UNCLE, what are you going to do with that gun?”

I turned around to discover my little niece, who had noiselessly entered my den just as I had removed from the wall a Mauser rifle, a souvenir of former campaigns in South Africa. My reply to her was in these few words: “I am going to ‘*Hunt the Hun*,’ for England has declared war against Germany.”

As I replaced the rifle on the wall, memories of my previous campaigns arose before me and the chance of going on active service appealed to me strongly.

When war broke out between England and Germany, I was living in Toronto, Canada, and was at that time an officer in an irregular corps known by the name of the Legion of

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

Frontiersmen. The men composing the corps were chiefly veterans of other wars and ex-soldiers. All were of the true fighting stock and each was imbued with the sole idea of doing his bit for king and country.

When I reached our district headquarters that same evening, I met a determined lot of Britishers all eager to answer the call that we knew would come from the Motherland. We held a meeting to discuss ways and means and how we could best assist the mother country. We decided that we should cable over at once to our commanding officer, Col. Driscoll, in London, England. Col. Driscoll was the organiser and commanding officer of the Driscoll Scouts in the Boer War. He had organised some 80,000 frontiersmen all over the British Empire. In response to our cable, we had a reply from him in which he informed us that we would have to go as infantry. The frontiersmen were trained as cavalry, so we were a rather disappointed lot that we could not go as mounted troops.

HUNTING THE HUN

We therefore had to break away from the old organisation. I offered myself and my men to Major General Sir Sam Hughes, who advised us to join the Canadian Militia. This we did, and later on I received my commission and at once began to drill and train the men as infantry. This was not a difficult task, as nearly all of them had previous experience.

Eventually we were warned for overseas, but to my great disappointment, I was held back to do further recruiting two days before sailing. I at once began to recruit all over again, and my new battalion furnished me with a few amusing little incidents.

The men of this new battalion were a splendid lot taken from all walks of life, but each full of the one idea—doing his bit for King and Country. With such a gathering of men, you will always find some very keen wits.

I had occasion to remember one young fellow in particular named Duffy. He was a very green recruit, and while on guard duty for the first time, I happened to be passing his

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

post. He stopped me and said, "Are you one of those fellows I have to salute?" To this question I replied "Yes." Then he wanted to know why he had to salute me!

I gave him the desired information and passed on. I could see that he was going to be an amusing character, and I had not long to wait before I found this to be true. He was paraded before me one morning by the sergeant. When I asked Duffy to state his business, he told me that he wanted to give in his resignation, as he had changed his mind about soldiering and he thought it only fair to give us a week's notice in order that we could get a man for his place. He was very much surprised to learn that he could not resign unless the medical officer would certify him as being unfit. After this I noticed he was very often on the sick list.

One morning just as we were about to commence a long hike, he was again paraded to me by an N.C.O. I asked him what he wanted this time, and he replied with a very pitiable

HUNTING THE HUN

expression on his face: "Sir, I want you to put me on fatigue work, I don't care how hard it is." I asked him why he wanted to do this fatigue work, as Tommy generally does not like this, and he replied, "Sir, I had a dream last night that if I went up a certain hill, which we had to climb on this march, I would drop dead."

My reply to Duffy was, "Well, we'll take a chance on it." So Duffy had to go on the route march.

The same evening there was a baseball match on the camp grounds. To my amazement I saw Duffy playing with the team. He was running and shouting as if his very life depended upon the outcome. When I had an opportunity to speak to him, I said, "Well, Duffy, how about that dream? I thought you would be a dead man by now, but I see that you are very much alive." He replied, "Yes, sir, I came out better than I expected." However, Duffy has climbed over more obstacles

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

than a hill since then, and is now the proud possessor of a D.C.M.

A short time afterwards I went to Ottawa and had an interview with the ex-Minister of Militia, Major-General Sir Sam Hughes, with whom I had served in the same brigade in the South African War. I asked him to allow me to proceed overseas with a view of transferring to the Imperial Army. It was characteristic of the Minister to ask me when I wanted to go, and I answered him, "As soon as possible, sir." He then said, "Are you ready to leave to-morrow night?" I told him that I could not leave to-morrow night, but could leave in one week's time. I received the necessary documents, and a week from that date sailed from Montreal on the S.S. *Metagama*. There were 81 officers and 3,000 rank and file on board. The voyage was enlivened by the music of the battalion bands.

The trip across was also made interesting by boat and other drills. After our first boat drill, as I was an unattached officer, I was

HUNTING THE HUN

shown the place on the deck where, in the event of our being torpedoed, I was to take up my position. As we neared the danger zone, everyone was keenly on the lookout for the terror of the seas—the submarine.

It was with a great sigh of relief that we perceived our escorts, two small torpedo destroyers, steaming in our direction. They were soon circling around us, and from that time onward everyone on board carried life belts around with them, ready to put on at a moment's notice. It was not long before we sighted land, and later on we docked at Plymouth. The same evening I was in London, and was an eyewitness that night of a Zeppelin raid.

Few people on this side of the Atlantic realise the nature of a Zeppelin raid.

I can scarcely describe the horror I felt as the bombs began to descend on their errand of destruction and murder. The searchlights began to hunt the air for signs of the airships, and soon we heard the sharp reports of our

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

anti-aircraft guns along the Thames and also the big guns at London Bridge.

The roar of the guns was terrible, but nowhere did I see any fear shown by the populace. Children cried out, but no one could blame them for that. The streets were weirdly dark, and with the shaded street lamps and the shrill whistle of the taxis everything seemed to be mysterious.

We could not see the airships. They were so high up in the air that we could not even see a speck in the sky.

All at once the guns ceased to roar, and then the air raid was over. Casualties were few. In one house, where a number of poor people had taken shelter, the roof fell in and the building caught fire. Amongst the killed was a young clergyman who had been preaching to the people at this critical moment. At this house, the people had taken shelter in the basement, which they thought was safer than their own homes.

I was very much impressed with an old lady

HUNTING THE HUN

who kept a fish and chip shop. Her establishment had been partially destroyed. One-half of the window had been blown out and on the other half of the window was displayed a sign which read "Damn the Zeppelins. To Hell with the Kaiser. Fish and Chips as Usual." This shows the spirit of the women of Britain. You can't beat morale like that.

In this manner the Huns wage war, trying to weaken the morale of the people. If they would consider for one moment the spirit of a nation like England, who gave the dead crew of one of these destroyed Zeppelins a military funeral, they would realise that a nation which treats a dead enemy like this has a morale that can never be broken. Incidents like the foregoing make the people more determined than ever to push the war to a victorious and successful conclusion.

The morning after my arrival I called at the Canadian War Office—the Cecil Chambers, the Strand, London. I had a letter of introduction to Major General J. Carson, who

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

was then the official representative of the Canadian War Office in England. I was there informed by Staff Captain Oulster that the General was in France, and that he, the Captain, could not tell me when he would get back. I therefore seized the opportunity to go to my home town in West Cumberland, being furnished with the necessary railway warrant. This I appreciated and needless to say I was very pleased to visit the town of my birth, although it was many years since I had left it. I still had friends there whom I was as glad to see as they were to see me. Whilst there, I had related to me the following incident:

On the west coast of Cumberland there is a small seaport town named Harrington, which is about four miles from where I was born. In this little town there are a number of blast furnaces, and adjacent to the furnaces there are some by-product works. The product made here is used, I suppose, in the making of munitions.

These by-product works had been erected

HUNTING THE HUN

several years ago by German workmen, all the foremen and managers being also German. After the work was completed many of these Germans remained in the immediate neighbourhood. Nobody at that time thought anything about it, but shortly after the war there was a rude awakening one morning. For this little town was shelled by a submarine that had penetrated up the Solway Firth with the object of destroying the by-product works. However the attack was unsuccessful.

It was discovered later on that the wife of one of our leading citizens, who was herself a German, had boasted to her maid about the cleverness of the Germans, who remembered the locality and returned to destroy these works. It was due to the good common sense displayed by this Cumberland girl, who reported the boastful German lady to the authorities, that she was interned. This set the authorities moving, and they discovered that all along the coast for many miles prominent houses had been erected within recent years.

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

All of them were occupied and owned by Germans. It was a very simple matter for any one in these houses to signal out to sea. However, I am pleased to say short work was made of any German who was living in these houses.

Later on I was pleased to meet two fellow townsmen of mine, both of whom had won the V.C. whilst serving with the border regiment in France. Another friend of mine that I met in civilian clothes, who, I thought, should be with the colours, was a big strong looking young man. When I rather angrily asked why he was not serving, he fumbled at his throat and tried to speak, his face flushing at the same time. He then drew out of his pocket a small slate and with a slate pencil wrote on it these words, "I can't speak, Jim, the Hun gas has destroyed my throat and tongue."

He was in the first gas attack and got badly gassed, with the above result. I don't know how to describe my feelings, but I felt proud to shake his hand and the water was near to

HUNTING THE HUN

my eyes when I did so. Now each invalided soldier is given a numbered button to show that he has been on active service at the front, so that mistakes like mine no longer occur.

I also met a young officer who had been invalided from Gallipoli with wounds, two of which were rather peculiar. One bullet had entered behind his ear and traversed around his cheek, coming out just between the eye and the bridge of the nose. The other one had taken the centre of the forehead for a path. To use his phrase, the Turks had put a permanent parting in his hair.

After spending a few days at my home town, I journeyed back to London but was informed again by Staff Captain Oulster that Major General J. Carson was still in France. This was rather awkward for me, so I asked Captain Oulster if he could give me the necessary letters of introduction to take over to the British War Office. Captain Oulster furnished me with the necessary documents, which I took over.

THE CALL OF THE MOTHERLAND

A few days later I went before the medical officer and passed my medical examination with flying colours. Finally I was given a commission in the 12th Royal Warwicks, but before the commission had been made out friends of mine interested themselves in my behalf and I got over to France as an unattached officer.

CHAPTER IV

WE MOVE FORWARD

ON the night of the 9th our Company Commander received orders to establish a strong post, which was to consist of one company. After the company had been inspected we moved out of our trench in sections about 100 yards' distance having the usual connecting files.

It was raining very hard, but this was nothing new. We had to make our way over ground that was literally a sea of mud and honeycombed with shell holes and mine craters. One of my men slipped off the lip of a mine crater and rolled down almost up to the neck in mud and water. He was a Bachelor of Science and used to have various arguments with one of the boys who hastened to his rescue. This argument had evidently consisted of the

WE MOVE FORWARD

rescuer's knowledge of physiology and phrenology. Evidently the man in the crater had told in a previous argument on these subjects that the rescuer's life was half lost because he did not know anything on these subjects. I was very much surprised to hear the man detailed for rescue shouting down the crater and asking our Professor of Science if he knew anything about "Swimology" and the answer being "No," the rescuer shouted down, "Then, by jabbers, the whole of your life is lost."

After getting our professor out, we moved forward until we got our position, 'way out in No Man's Land, where the men were allotted their tasks. They at once commenced to dig by connecting up the shell holes, thus making a fair trench without being exposed to the enemy fire. During the time we were digging the Huns were sending up their white flares, but as they were some distance away our party was not conspicuous. Although the Huns did not know where we were, they had the unpleasant habit of firing shells in most out of the way

HUNTING THE HUN

places. So the men never relaxed their efforts, but kept digging away for dear life, as they did not know how soon there might be a counter attack. Eventually we got our work completed. We then posted sentries and sent out a small patrol. The object of our strong post was to hold the enemy in check, and thus give sufficient time for the troops in rear to resist any counter attack that might be made by the Huns. During the night everything passed off quietly and no counter attack was attempted. The Germans had evidently had all the fight taken out of them on that eventful day.

At daybreak I served out the usual allowance of rum to each man. As every man was wet and numb with the cold, the issue of this allowance was very much appreciated. I would like to see the people that advocate doing away with the rum issue take a turn in the trenches during the cold and rainy season. I think that they would come away perfectly satisfied in their minds that the rum ration un-

WE MOVE FORWARD

der these circumstances is essential for the welfare of the men. It is so easy for people at home who have every luxury and comfort to sit down and criticise this issue. People who have never had any hardships to endure like those the soldiers in the trenches have will tell you that tea or coffee will do equally as well, but from long experience we in the army know different. I am a temperate man myself but I found benefit from this small drop of rum. Now that I am not in the trenches I don't need it and do not take it. The same applies to the majority of our soldiers. The army does not encourage the men to drink, as the drunkard is given very drastic treatment. We have no use for him.

On the morning of the 12th of April as I looked over the recently captured battle ground, I noticed that the railway construction troops had completed building a narrow gauge railway, which ran from our forward base of supplies at La Targette as far as Thelus, a very short distance from where I stood. Little

HUNTING THE HUN

gasolene engines were busy hauling up ammunition, which they distributed to the various ammunition dumps that were located at considerable intervals alongside the track. At one time we had large ammunition dumps; but we have learned from experience that it is better to have a series of small dumps well separated, so that if a shell from the enemy explodes on the dump, as it sometimes happens, our loss is not so great. The shells are carefully laid on a wooden flooring in little groups. Between each group is a layer of sand bag partitions. From these points the shells are carried forward to the different batteries on the backs of mules.

The labour and pioneer battalions assisted by some of the infantry were filling in the shell holes and clearing the débris to make new roads for the mule trains and transports that were to bring up the supplies. Along the Lens-Arras road men were clearing away fallen trees that had been struck by the shells and lay across the road. Owing to the high

WE MOVE FORWARD

elevation of the ground our men could work both night and day without being observed.

The evening of the 12th we received orders to move forward and dig a trench at a given map location some 1500 yards from where we were. I was ordered to have my platoon dig in at a certain distance in front of a high railway embankment. I carefully took my compass bearing and, after each platoon had been carefully inspected by the platoon commanders, we moved off in single file, marching at ease. We crossed the Lens-Arras road, until we arrived and halted a short distance in front of what was left of the little village of Thelus.

This little village was now a mass of ruins. Our whole brigade assembled there. At nine o'clock platoons started to move off consecutively, and when our turn arrived we proceeded towards the crest of the Ridge and passed over some of the late German trenches. As we descended beneath the crest I noticed near me a thick concrete German heavy gun emplacement. This gun and several others on

HUNTING THE HUN

the same alignment had been captured by us and we were now using them against the enemy. Our progress was extremely slow owing to the fact that on the steep slope of the ridge was a dense growth of brushwood and shell shattered trees. It would have been much easier for us to move along the Lens-Arras road which for a distance ran almost parallel to the route we were taking, but as this was under constant shell fire from the Huns it was considered advisable to take a more difficult but safer way.

When we reached the bottom of the slope we came to a series of German trenches recently evacuated by them. On my right we passed close to what I took to be the ruins of a windmill. Then we came to a high railroad embankment and, passing under a bridge, found ourselves in open country.

The Germans during this period were sending up their star shells in abundance, the outline of the trenches was plainly to be seen, searchlights were busy searching the sky for

WE MOVE FORWARD

our aeroplanes, which they thought might be passing over the lines in a bombing raid.

Word was now passed along to me that our line was broken. I therefore had to halt to allow those in the rear to catch up. I had set my luminous prismatic compass and began to march on my bearing which I eventually reached. Each man was allotted his task, which consisted of digging an amount of trench equal to the length of his outstretched arms.

Owing to the difficult nature of the ground we had to march over, we lost a great deal of time. As it was within one hour of daylight, we had no time to lose to get under the necessary cover for protection from the fire of the enemy. Some of the boys had brought with them German shovels which they had obtained in the Berliner House dugout. This was an improvement on the entrenching tool that every man is supplied with. The latter, being very much smaller, is not as effective as a shovel but is much easier to carry. It did not require much persuasion on my part to im-

HUNTING THE HUN

press on the minds of the boys the urgency of digging in and getting under cover before daylight.

In my platoon I had a big husky French-Canadian who was an excellent soldier. Since officers do not carry entrenching tools I asked him to dig a place for me alongside of him. The infantry Tommy as a rule likes to take his time providing he is safe, whilst on a working party, from the enemy's fire, but when he realises the seriousness of the situation he can develop a remarkable amount of speed and energy. My boys did not lack pep, speed or energy and they began to work with grim determination. I handed over my platoon to the platoon sergeant for a few minutes to see if the platoons on my right and left flanks were all right, so that we would be able to connect up our trenches during the day when we would be under cover.

When I got back to my platoon I keenly supervised the boys at their work, paying particular attention to the private who was dig-

WE MOVE FORWARD

ging a place for himself and me. During this time I had two men wounded by shrapnel. After having their wounds attended to they were carried out on a stretcher to the regimental aid post. Although their wounds must have been painful they were carried out smiling and in good spirits. We were now under cover, so I issued the boys their tot of rum and posted my sentries who, through their periscopes, were to watch for any movement on the part of the enemy.

About 8.00 A. M. we heard the sharp report of our anti-aircraft guns and observed the white puffs of smoke that the shell emitted as it burst around the German aeroplanes high up in the sky. All at once we noticed aeroplanes manœuvring in the air and observed a quick diving motion from one of them which had opened fire on the one underneath, as the latter plane fell to the ground in a mass of flames. Afterwards the victor flew back over our lines, so we knew that another Hun avia-

HUNTING THE HUN

tor had fallen a victim to one of our R.F.C. men.

At midnight our field guns were brought forward and began to fire from behind the railway embankment at the Hun trenches. It was not long before the Huns started to retaliate with gas shells. The slight wind that was blowing in our direction soon brought the vile fumes towards us. Without a moment's delay every one put on his gas helmet or small box respirator. We were then safe from the deadly gas fumes, but an occasional German shrapnel shell would burst over our heads. The Huns' artillery fire was principally directed against our artillery, but they could not locate them.

We were now expecting the Germans to make an attack and were all in readiness to receive them. About 5.30 A. M., after being under the gas shell bombardment for about five hours, the air gradually got clearer and each platoon officer cautiously removed his gas mask to test the air. After finding it safe,

WE MOVE FORWARD

they gave orders to the men to take their gas masks off.

On April 14th the Huns had found out by their aerial service the position of our trenches, so in the afternoon they started to bracket fire our trench. That is to say, as they did not know the exact range, they observed by aeroplanes or observation balloons the effect of shells which their artillery had dropped first in front of our trench and then in the rear. Gradually working inwards, they located the trench. It certainly was an unpleasant feeling as these searching shells commenced to come nearer and nearer.

A private who had been sent up with a ration party the previous night to take the place of a man who had been wounded, was in the line for the first time. He got very excited when the Huns started to bracket fire our trench and kept running up and down from one end of the trench to the other until he was tired out. Finally he decided he would not run any more and sat down to smoke a pipe.

HUNTING THE HUN

By this time the Germans had succeeded in getting the correct range of our trench. They sent over a shell which blew the poor fellow to pieces.

Our S.O.S. signal had been sent back and the forward observation officer was now alive to the situation. It was not long before we heard the sweet music in our ears of the swish, swish of our artillery as the shells passed over our heads on their errand to the German batteries, which they soon located and silenced.

The night of the 14th we were relieved and retired to a series of dugouts situated just beneath the railway track. These dugouts had formerly been occupied by the Huns when they had held the ridge. The idea was that if the Germans should counterattack we would immediately get over the top of the railway embankment and make it our line of resistance.

The dugout occupied by our company officers had evidently been a German battalion headquarters, as it was fitted up with comfort-

WE MOVE FORWARD

able bunks and had in the rear a beautiful kitchen garden in which all kinds of vegetables were growing at one time. It was quite evident the Germans had been living very luxuriously. About 6:30 the next evening, while we officers were having our supper, a shell landed suddenly on the top of the railway embankment. We thought that the Germans intended shelling this point.

As we hastily rushed through the doorway into the open, each officer blowing his whistle for the men to come out of the various dug-outs along the railway embankment, I noticed that a working party from the 22nd French Canadian Battalion instead of going under the bridge had passed over the embankment. The Germans had directed their fire upon this party, inflicting several casualties. They then started to shell along the embankment, killing two brigade machine gun company men in the next dugout to ours.

Later on I saw all my men located in the various shell holes. I then took up my position

HUNTING THE HUN

alongside of my batman and stretcher bearer, remaining with them until 3.00 in the morning. We were now so used to the periodical shelling that we did not pay any attention to it. We all felt like sleeping although it was exceedingly cold and rainy. Three of us huddled close to one another for warmth, the stretcher bearer lying next to me. He proved a most uncomfortable companion as he was continually trying to rub his back against the stretcher. I had my suspicions that I would soon be hunting something other than Huns.

CHAPTER V

HUNTING THE HUN

FOR three weeks my battalion practiced going over the tapes for an attack on the Cité St. Laurent, a suburb of Lens. The tapes were laid on the ground to represent the trenches held by the Germans. Various coloured flags were placed at the corners of the assumed streets and these were named as we would find the streets when we made our attack. The church of the town was represented by a cross made of tape. Our battalion frontage was some 300 yards, and at some places we were not more than the same distance away from the Hun trench.

In order to reach our front line trenches we had to go through an ingoing communication trench which ran partly on the outskirts of the Cité St. Pierre and through the centre of the

HUNTING THE HUN

Cité St. Edouard. We had already made a tour in the sector of the line from which we were to go "over the top." As a result of constant artillery activities on both sides we had many casualties. A great number of guns were in the Cité St. Pierre and as far up as the Cité St. Edouard. Both forces strafed incessantly.

On the morn of the 14th of August we were told that the attack was to take place on the morn of the 15th. "Zero Hour" was set for 4.20 A.M. Everyone got busy getting things ready to move. All surplus kits were returned to the quartermaster's stores. In the afternoon church service was held and an excellent sermon was preached by our battalion padre. Two hymns were sung during the service, "Onward, Christian Soldiers" and "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Everyone's taking communion closed the service.

No. 1 sections of all platoons participating in the attack were supplied with special wire cutters, which were an attachment to the

HUNTING THE HUN

rifles. That evening about seven o'clock all companies fell in on their respective parade grounds, where a thorough inspection was made by the officers. One platoon per company remained out of the line as usual. Each company commander took charge of his respective company, the seconds in command remaining out.

The Colonel gave us a little talk and said that we would be going into the attack and that our work would partly consist of village fighting. Everyone was expected to live up to the good reputation our battalion had made. He then shook hands with each officer, all officers in turn shaking hands with each other. One of my friends, when I shook hands with him, told me he was going in for the last time. He really did not expect to come out alive. I rather pooh-poohed the matter at the time and it made me feel badly for him and rather nervous. Unfortunately his presentiment came true.

As the Huns were constantly shelling our

HUNTING THE HUN

back area, we marched off the parade ground in sections at distances of 100 yards. When we arrived at the Cité St. Pierre, which had previously been captured by us, and as we passed through this Cité, where our Brigade Headquarters were established in what had been a former deep German dugout, we were told by one of the officers of Brigade Headquarters that the "Zero Hour" would be 4.20 A. M. and that we were to go "over the top" at that time.

As we followed the ingoing communicating trench, part of which ran through the middle of the street, there were houses on both sides. These the German artillery was constantly playing on, so bricks and mortar flew in all directions. The few houses that had been left standing were demolished as if they had been made of cardboard. You can well imagine that when a shell hit anywhere near a house it made things very unpleasant for those of us passing through these trenches.

The platoon officer, who had preceded me,

HUNTING THE HUN

had evidently got out of the communicating trench to see how his men were coming up from the rear. When I passed him he was lying on the sidewalk. I did not think at that time he was dangerously wounded as he waved his hand to me. I could not stop to give him any attention for, although he was my best friend, my duty was imperative and I had to lead my men onwards. I therefore shouted for the stretcher bearer from his platoon and gave the necessary instructions for his care. I regretted very much to hear that he passed away in a few hours after receiving his wound.

By the time we reached the firing line, which was directly in front of the Cité St. Edouard (also a suburb of Lens), I had eight casualties. Three men had been killed, and five wounded. The wounded had been given every attention and sent back to the rear. The leading platoon was now in charge of the platoon sergeant, a very capable man who had taken charge of the platoon whilst in practice for this

HUNTING THE HUN

attack. All the other N.C.O.'s had also been trained to do this, so that in case any platoon officer became a casualty they would be able to carry on.

As we arrived at the firing line the holding troops were "standing to" on the fire step. We could thus pass along in their rear. Guides were assigned to each platoon to show us the openings that had been made in our barbed wire so that we could then get into No Man's Land without being obliged to cut the wire. During this time the Huns were incessantly sending up their star shells and other coloured rockets.

I gave the necessary instructions to N.C.O.'s in charge of sections, and then we crawled out through the barbed wire and got into shell holes. The Huns at this time were firing "whizz bangs" and Minnenwerfers at our front line, these being short ranged shells. As the German star shells illuminated the ground, I noticed that the barbed wire had not been altogether destroyed by our artillery. This

HUNTING THE HUN

was probably due to the fact of the close proximity of the two opposing lines, which prevented our artillery from concentrating its fire as they would have done if we had been further apart. It was for this reason that the No. 1 section of each platoon had been supplied with special rifle wire cutters.

At 3.45 A.M. I served the rum to the boys before "going over." It was certainly a very dangerous job, as my batman and I had to crawl from one shell hole to another to give each man his allowance. When a star shell would go up I would be exposed but would try to screen myself flat to the ground. I never wanted to appear so small in my life and I thought all the time that I must have been as huge as an elephant. I did not want to be "napooed" whilst acting as rum server, and if I had to "go west" I wanted to go fighting at the head of my men.

However, I served all out in safety and then crawled back to my shell hole. I looked at my watch and saw that it was exactly 4.00 A.M.

HUNTING THE HUN

The artillery on both sides was now less active. Dawn was just breaking; a slight mist appeared. The men had their bayonets fixed and were all ready and anxious for the signal to "go over." At 4.19 A.M. a heavy barrage was laid on our front line and rear trenches. We knew then that the Huns had anticipated our attack, and had by some means found out our "Zero Hour." We were not able to move forward until the "Zero Hour."

Exactly at 4.20 our artillery opened up, and as the shells passed over our heads to the German front line they gave us a great deal of satisfaction. At the same time mines that were previously laid beneath the German trenches were exploded and great big cones of flames shot up into the air. These pillars of fire appeared to be about twenty feet at the base and forty feet high. I would think in my estimation there would be about one hundred of these pillars of flame all along the German front support lines. We were now "over the top" and were advancing in two waves in extended

HUNTING THE HUN

order. The third wave was still in the front line trench and would remain there until our barrage lifted, when we would advance to our first objective. Then the third wave would come out.

When within 50 yards of our barrage I signalled to the men to take all possible cover, which they quickly did by getting into the shell holes. As I looked to my right I saw Lieutenant L—— at the head of what was left of his platoon. He was leading them into their position. Blood was flowing from his face and running down all over his tunic, but he was bravely carrying on. Just as he was about to slide into a shell hole with another man, who I presume was his batman, a shell landed close to them. As the dust and smoke cleared away I noticed on the ground their two dead bodies. Each one had answered his country's call. My friend's presentiment had come true!

Matters were now very exciting. The bursting of shrapnel and the crumps of large shells were exploding around us. Every man

HUNTING THE HUN

knew that his life depended upon his keeping cool. We were impatiently waiting for the barrage to lift, as we were expecting to encounter the Germans out in the open as soon as that happened.

The German is a good fighter as long as he can rub shoulders with his comrades. But when he gets to close quarters and is opposed to our men with the bayonet he seems to wilt. Our boys have no difficulty in putting him out of business then. I had a Russian in my platoon whose boast was that he personally accounted for one dozen Germans and he had notched his rifle, much against orders, twelve times. His ambition was to get another dozen in this fight. He was in the next shell hole to mine and was eagerly watching for me to give the signal to advance. When I did give it, he went along, and I had little doubt, from the look on his face, that he would get another dozen.

I had lost quite a number of men, my platoon was very much diminished, and the platoon

HUNTING THE HUN

sergeant had been killed. As our barrage lifted we advanced and made a dash into the German front line trench, to find nothing there except the mangled German bodies. We ran along the trenches, but could not find anything. By this time our moppers-up were in the trenches, so we left them to look after the dugouts and immediately clambered out and made for the German second line.

On the second line we encountered a number of Saxons. They all appeared to be terrified and put up a very feeble resistance. I afterwards learned through a prisoner that these Saxons were sent out in front to resist our advance, and that the Prussian Guards had threatened to shoot them from the rear if they showed any hesitation in going forward. They were made to act as a buffer between us and the Guards. They seemed to be quite young and boyish looking, and did not appear to have any heart for the fight.

During this time we were very much annoyed by the Hun aeroplanes which were drop-

HUNTING THE HUN

ping bombs and firing their machine guns upon us from above. I was glad to see two German aeroplanes brought down, for our aviators were getting busy and there were numerous battles in the air. It was not long until our boys had the air supremacy, and we were left in peace from that quarter.

As we advanced with our barrage, a German barrage of machine gun bullets played around us as well as their shells. We got into Cité St. Laurent and followed a German trench for some distance, then out again until we reached what I took to be the church, now in ruins.

We now got into a former German communication trench, called "commotion trench" for obvious reasons. There was certainly some commotion here. We had to fight our way up this trench, dodging German stick bombs and rifle grenades, walking over dead German bodies, until we reached our objective, a trench called Nun's Alley. At a certain point I established my Lewis gun section so that they

HUNTING THE HUN

could fire up a certain sector of a trench running at right angles to Nun's Alley, which was originally part of the Hun's strong line of resistance.

The battalion was so much reduced in strength that what was left of the whole battalion was required to hold the front line.

At noon the Germans retreated, but all day long their artillery as well as our own was busy. A great deal of counter battery work was going on. Shells were likewise being dropped along the sector of the German trenches we had captured from them. At dusk as we were "standing to" the Germans sent up a great number of coloured rockets, and suddenly our outpost men who had been stationed in shell holes came in with the news that the Prussian Guards were advancing in close formation on a counterattack against us. Our S.O.S. was sent up and quickly answered by our artillery. Just before their barrage opened up, we quickly jumped out of Nun's Alley trench and got into shell holes.

HUNTING THE HUN

With the assistance from our artillery, and every machine gun and rifle playing upon the advancing hordes of Prussians in close formation, we mowed them down ruthlessly. What was left of them turned and fled.

Until the night of the 18th we held the line, and during this time we had four counterattacks in one day. Our ration parties could not be sent out, nor could we get our rations for two days. Our iron rations were eaten by special permission from the commanding officer, and it was only on the night of the relief that we were able to obtain more food.

I noticed the Germans had built some very good and deep dugouts in Nun's Alley, but as we were liable to counterattack at any time, I did not examine them.

I was glad for the few men I had left of my platoon when the relief took place, about 1.30 the morning of the 19th. They were all keyed up to the highest pitch and keeping up on their nerves alone. They had had no sleep while they were in the attack, so after giving all in-

HUNTING THE HUN

formation about the enemy to the platoon commander of the relief, we got on our way back to rest billets.

We did not delay and were soon marching away from the danger zone. The nervous strain began to wear off the men, although they were dropping from lack of sleep and fatigue. First one man and then another would drop out. When we were about 800 yards from our rest billets I heard a loud "hurrah! hurrah!" It came from the officers and men whose turn it had been to remain out of the line. They had come to meet us and brought along with them the Brigade Bagpipers, who immediately began to strike up "The Campbells Are Coming" and "The Cock of the North." It was wonderful, the effect this music had on the boys, who immediately began to brace up and marched in very briskly. Our efforts and success were appreciated, and it was not long until we all had a good meal that had been specially prepared for us. And after eating the same, we were soon in bed.

HUNTING THE HUN

In the morning I heard one of the men making inquiries about my batman. I had missed him early in the fight but had been expecting him to turn up at any time. To my consternation I was informed by a man from another company that he had seen my batman's dead body in a shell hole. I regretted this news very much, as he had been like a friend to me. He had completed two years of medicine but like a great many more he had answered his country's call and gave his life for the cause.

The casualties of our battalion were four officers killed and six wounded and 260 men killed and wounded. It was a very hard fought battle but we gained and held all our objectives, inflicting terrible casualties on the Huns.

During the month of May one of our brigades made an attack on Fresnoy-en-Gohelle. It was what we call a little brigade show.

Fresnoy was three miles from Vimy station. At daylight early on May the sixth, the bri-

HUNTING THE HUN

gade went "over the top." The German barbed wire had all been cut by our artillery, so the Germans, anticipating the attack, met our brigade with a whole German division. This did not stop our brigade from advancing and closing with the enemy. In the little village of Fresnoy, though greatly outnumbered, they fought with the Huns for a whole day and night.

All the troops on both sides were wearing their gas helmets, and it was really a hand-to-hand struggle. Each one tried to tear the gas helmet from his opponent. A gas helmet pulled off a man meant his death, as the fumes were very thick. I later on spoke to an officer who participated in this fight and he told me of some of his experiences.

His eyesight had been rather bad previously. When he started to walk over No Man's Land, in his haste to put on his small box respirator, he lost his glasses and could not see very far in front of him. He led his men more by sense of direction than by sense of

HUNTING THE HUN

eyesight, as he could not see through his goggles without his glasses. He therefore had to go blindly along until he fell down in a shell hole, where he remained until the fumes had been dispelled. When he tried to crawl out of the shell hole German snipers in front of him made desperate attempts to pot him. However, he was fortunate enough to be allowed to remain until nearly dark, when he was located and brought back to safety. Our brigade suffered rather heavily in this attack, but we had the pleasure of inflicting a greater amount of casualties on the Germans than they had on us.

One of the most sanguinary encounters that I was ever in happened during the latter part of April. My company was doing duty in brigade support line which was a captured trench we had taken from the Germans. It was now being used by us as an observation trench. It ran along the slope of the ridge, and from it we could see the smoke coming out of the chimneys of the coal mines at Lens,

HUNTING THE HUN

about four and a quarter miles away. A splendid view of the ground occupied by the Hun could be had, as his trenches lay in front of us. One day about 4.30 P.M. we received information that the Germans were assembling in a certain sunken road with the view of making a counterattack. Our artillery had been given instructions to concentrate their fire at 5.30 P.M. upon this road. Excitement ran high in our trench and we were all anxious to be at the Huns again. Everyone that could was looking through periscopes and some peered over the top of the parapet as we eagerly waited for our artillery to commence.

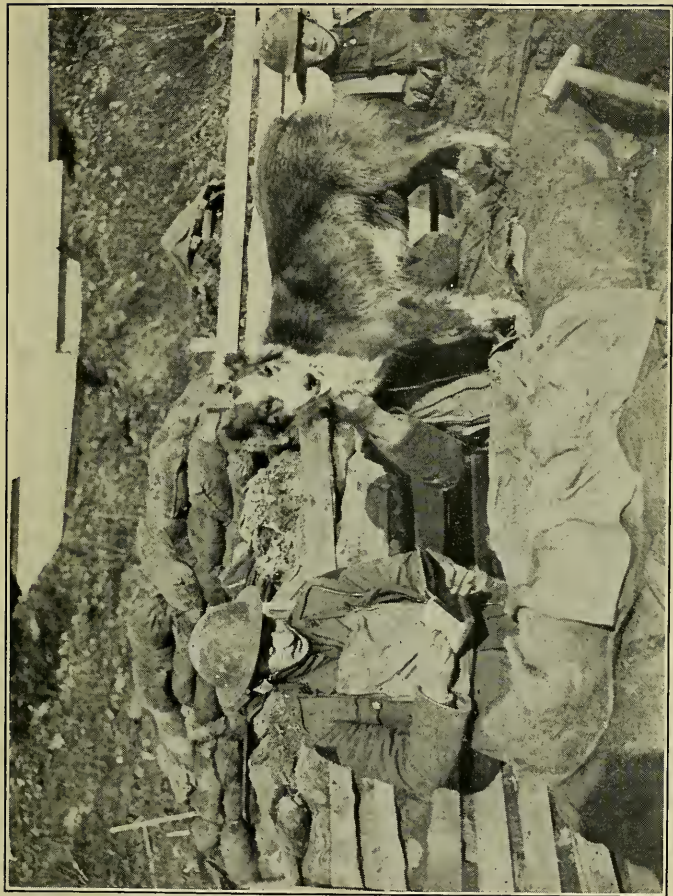
At 5:30 P.M., much to our surprise, our artillery did not open up. We suspected that the Germans had by some means found out that we knew they were assembling for this counterattack and that they therefore gave up the idea.

That even at dusk we prepared to advance, but during our stay in the observation trench we had five casualties in our company. We

HUNTING THE HUN

were to occupy a lately evacuated German trench which was directly in front of our firing line. The battalions on our right and left flank also had to move up. At 10.00 P.M. we left the observation trench and were met by guides from the battalion which was then holding the sector of the front line trench that we had to pass to get to the recently evacuated German trench, now to become our front line. With my guide I led my platoon in single file for a distance of 50 yards past the firing line. All at once the Germans commenced to bombard us with gas shells. We immediately put on our gas helmets and advanced through these poisonous fumes. When we were within 200 yards of our objective the Huns put up what we call a box barrage. They had evidently been warned of our advance.

A box barrage is shell fire directed along the rear and both flanks. It hemmed us in, although the flanking fire did not harm our company, as it was too far away from us, still the fire from the rear was gradually creeping up



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

A DOG USED TO CARRY MESSAGES IN THE TRENCHES

These dogs are fed only by their own keepers and must not be petted by the "Tommies," so that they will carry messages only to their masters

HUNTING THE HUN

to us, and it was a very anxious and trying time for our nerves as it came gradually towards us. I shouted out to form line in extended order and we made a rush for our objective, which we had named "Winnipeg trench." We managed to get into it in the nick of time, as the creeping barrage was almost on top of us.

We had lost about sixty men of the company during this advance, so we had sent up our S.O.S. signals. The artillery answered immediately by commencing to play a drum fire, or intense bombardment, upon the German artillery and trenches. It was not long before we had silenced their guns, as we must have sent over ten shells to the one of the Huns'. During this period my stretcher bearer had been kept very busy, and I had to send for additional stretcher bearers so that I could have the casualties attended to. My casualty report showed eight men killed, two missing, fifteen wounded.

I left the trenches. One officer and seven men were granted ten days' rest, I being the

HUNTING THE HUN

lucky officer. We left the trenches at midnight and went to Sains-en-Gohelle. I arrived here and found busses all ready to transport the men to the Railhead. We were conveyed to the Railhead and then entrained, detraining at Boulogne. From there we marched to Ambleteuse, a distance of ten kilometres.

Here were gathered together, I should judge, about 10,000 troops—all under canvas. Imperials, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders and Maoris were in the camp.

There were several Y. M. C. A. marquees and during our short and pleasant rest we were entertained by some of the most celebrated actors and actresses from England who had come over to offer their services free. It was very much appreciated by us and we thanked the Y. M. C. A. for their cordiality in giving us such a pleasant time.

Ten days passed all too quickly and we entrained at Wimereau, a short distance from Ambleteuse, amidst the cheers and waving of handkerchiefs by the girls of the W. A. A. C.

HUNTING THE HUN

(Women's Army Auxiliary Corps). There are over ten battalions of these girls in France, all doing their bit at the bases.

We left Wimereau at 1.30 in the afternoon. Every car in the train was packed to full capacity. Sometimes we were travelling at the rate of about thirty miles per hour, then we would slow down to five, depending upon the grade.

We arrived at Hasebrouck about 4.30 in the afternoon. We heard the reports of exploding shells and bombs as we approached the station, and as we looked out of the windows of the train we could see the French inhabitants fleeing out of the city. The Germans were shelling and bombing the town. I could see fires here and there in the neighbourhood. Our train slowly pulled into the station and stopped. Every window was occupied by the officers and men who were anxiously looking out at the fires and the damage that had been done by the German shells and bombs.

HUNTING THE HUN

A friend of mine whom I had met at the rest camp was in the next compartment to mine. He remarked to me that he did not mind the shelling so much if the civilian population were out of danger, and added that in his opinion he thought that we were quite safe. Suddenly a shell struck a tree not more than thirty yards away from us and a splinter glanced off and struck the railway train. I heard then the old familiar cry of "stretcher bearer," "stretcher bearer on the double," and an R.A.M.C. Sergeant came running over to our car. As I jumped out of my compartment, I went into the other one. There to my horror my friend was lying unconscious. Blood was flowing freely from all parts of his body, and as I helped to place him on the stretcher he passed away to the Great Beyond. In another car five N.C.O.'s were wounded from fragments of the same shell, so I could shake hands with myself on being fortunate to escape without injury.

CHAPTER VI

TRENCH ROUTINE

THE war establishment of an infantry battalion is about 1,046 men divided into four companies. There are four platoons to a company, and four sections to a platoon.

The platoon is the smallest unit in the field. It is often said that this is a platoon or junior officers' war, and I believe this is quite true. I must mention something about the organisation of this compact little unit.

As previously stated, a platoon consists of four sections. Taking for example an average strength of 49 O.R. (other ranks), a suitable organisation would be as follows:

Platoon Headquarters:	1 Officer
	1 Platoon Sergeant
	1 Officer's Batman
	1 Stretcher Bearer
	1 Cook

HUNTING THE HUN

No. 1 Section	1 N.C.O. 9 Riflemen 2 Snipers 1 Scout
No. 2 Section	1 N.C.O. 6 Rifle Grenadiers 3 Carriers
No. 3 Section	1 N.C.O. 2 Scouts 8 Lewis Gunners
No. 4 Section	1 N.C.O. 10 Bombers

Sometimes each section may wear a different coloured cloth armlet, so that you can tell at a glance what section a man belongs to. The platoon commander has at all times to look out for his men's comfort first—his own comfort and safety being a second consideration.

EQUIPMENT OF AN INFANTRY SOLDIER WHEN GOING "OVER THE TOP"

1 Steel Helmet which seems to him to weigh a ton when he is marching out of reach of

TRENCH ROUTINE

shell fire, but when under shell fire, he thinks it is as light as a feather and he wishes it were much heavier and bigger.

1 Iron Rations. A small, white bag containing 3 hardtack biscuits, a tin of bully beef, sometimes a tin of mixed tea and sugar.

1 Small Box Respirator or gas mask, at the alert position. This is lying flat on his chest.

1 P.H. or Smoke Helmet. This is a spare gas helmet, which is out of use, but is perfectly effective, and may be used if the small box respirator is damaged.

1 Haversack. This is fastened on the back of the man. D-shaped buckles are provided on the Webb equipment to allow for this.

1 Rubber Sheet. Fastened on the outside of the haversack.

220 Rounds of Small Arm Ammunition.

2 Mills Bombs per man. Ten bombs to bombers and rifle grenadiers. The latter have grenade cups, and copper rods about 12 inches long which are screwed into the base of the Mills bomb and are fired from a rifle.

HUNTING THE HUN

1 Ground Flare and Matches.

1 First Field Dressing.

2 Identification Discs.

1 Mess Tin.

2 Water Bottles, filled with water.

1 Jerkin.

1 Entrenching Tool and Handle.

1 Wire Cutter. Usually the riflemen have wire cutters attached to their rifle. There are about seven men supplied with wire cutters in a platoon.

1 Rifle and Bayonet.

Besides the above, during the cold and rainy weather each man takes a turn to carry the jar of rum, extra rations and bombs. Tommy is pretty well loaded down by the time he has all his equipment on him. Sometimes he may have to carry two extra bandoliers of cartridges.

There are four battalions to an infantry brigade and, like the company system, one of these four battalions in its turn is out for rest and training behind the lines. During this

TRENCH ROUTINE

time the other battalions are taking their turn in the trenches.

The battalions may be in the trenches for ten days. No fixed time is allotted as we have found out by experience that the Germans somehow or other learn the night and time of our relief and they then open up their artillery upon us. Consequently when we go into the trenches, we never know how long we are going to remain there. We might make a tour of say ten days, three days in the support line, two days in the front, two days in the reserve, then back again for another three days in the front line. It all depends upon brigade headquarters staff, who order operations for relief before the battalion takes over the trenches from another unit. The relief takes place under cover of darkness.

The battalion that is relieving the one that is in the trenches is met by guides from the battalion to be relieved at a rendezvous point. There is one guide for each platoon. He conducts them separately and in single file to the

HUNTING THE HUN

part of the line that they have to occupy. Platoons are widely separated if going over open ground. As the incoming platoons enter the trench, they line up directly in the rear of the men who are to be relieved, who are "standing to" on the fire step with all their equipment on. On the command "stand down" the relief takes the place of the outgoing party.

It is usual to have one officer per company accompanied by some N.C.O.'s. One day before the relief takes place the actual conditions and situation must be ascertained. If the communication trenches are good this is often done in daylight. The trench stores are taken over by an officer who checks them up, but does not sign a receipt until the relief actually takes place.

All information of value such as the name of the opposing force, whether they are Prussians, Saxons or Bavarians, the whereabouts of their machine guns and if there was much activity shown on the part of the enemy, de-

TRENCH ROUTINE

scription of their S.O.S. signal, if known, is passed on to the relieving force.

If the enemy trenches are close to ours we may run a little narrow sap extending from our fire trench in the direction of the enemy. Great pains are taken to conceal this sap. The excavated earth is placed in sand bags and carried some distance away. At the end of this sap, which may be 3 x 4 feet, we make a cutting sufficiently large to accommodate two men. As a rule the men in this sap, or listening post, as it is commonly called, are connected with the sentry in the fire trench by a long, strong cord. Signals are pre-arranged to give silent warning of any movements on the part of the enemy.

The duties of these men are very exacting and great caution must be observed. They must listen for any underground mining or hammering on the faucet of gas drums. Consequently this is very important work and a great deal depends upon the coolness and intelligence of the men in the listening post. As

HUNTING THE HUN

the work is very nerve racking, reliefs usually take place every hour. A platoon officer may accompany such relief.

The platoon officers on duty have to make up several reports such as: weather report, showing strength and direction of the wind, and situation report, stating particulars of what may have been seen of the enemy, the number of shells fired in our direction, also any results noted from the firing of the German rocket signals. There is also a casualty report showing the number of casualties during the day. Another report is made out for the shortage of equipment, ammunition, bombs, etc.

TRENCH ORDERS

1. DUTIES—(a) One officer per company and one N.C.O. per platoon will always be on duty.

(b) By night the officer and N.C.O. on duty will frequently patrol the trench line, to see that the sentries are alert and to inquire

TRENCH ROUTINE

whether they have any information to report about the enemy.

(c) The N.C.O. coming on duty will go around and post new sentries with the N.C.O. coming off duty.

(d) The length of each tour of duty will depend on the number of officers and N.C.O.'s available in the company. Normally, each tour should be, by night 2 hours, by day 4 hours, day commencing at morning "stand to" and night commencing at evening "stand to." In inclement weather it may be advisable to reduce the tour to 1 hour.

(e) N.C.O.'s after posting sentries will report "All correct" or otherwise to the officer on duty.

(f) The officer on duty will be responsible for sending in the reports required by battalion headquarters, unless there is anything unusual to report, when this duty will be performed by the company commander.

(g) Men will be warned for duty by the

HUNTING THE HUN

platoon N.C.O. on duty. This will be done at evening "stand to."

(h) On being detailed for duty, a man will be informed at which hours he will come on duty.

(i) When possible to do so, notice boards will be placed in each platoon's trench, on which will be pinned, daily, all orders regarding working parties, and a list of the men in the platoon, giving the time at which they will come on sentry and other duty.

(j) Except under special circumstances, such, for instance, as a sentry being killed or wounded, no sentry will be relieved by another man unless the relief is properly carried out in the presence of a N.C.O.

2. SENTRIES—*By Night*—(a) Sentries will be posted every 2 hours, except under bad weather conditions, when the length of the tour of sentry may be reduced.

(b) From evening "stand to" till morning "stand to" one sentry to every three or four bays in the fire trench will be posted. If wir-

TRENCH ROUTINE

ing or digging parties are out in front, or listening posts are numerous, this number may be reduced.

(c) The next relief will remain within reach of the sentry.

(d) Every sentry is to be regularly posted by a N.C.O., who will explain to him his duties and the front to be watched, and ascertain that the sentry and his relief are aware of the position of the section and platoon commanders, the sentries on either side, and whether there are any patrols or working parties out in front. Should there be salients in the line, the sentry will be carefully instructed, so as to avoid any possibility of him firing toward his own trenches.

(e) By night or in places which have the reputation of being *dangerous*, *i.e.*, where enemy are suspected of mining, advanced posts, etc., no man should ever be posted alone. There should be either a double sentry post, or the next relief should rest within kicking distance of the sentry.

HUNTING THE HUN

By Day—(f) The number of sentries required depends on the proximity of the enemy's trench line and whether a good view to the front can be obtained, *normally one to every four bays is sufficient.*

(g) Every sentry will be provided with a periscope.

(h) Well protected "look out" posts for sentries will be built along the front trench line.

(i) SENDING OUT OF PATROLS—Patrols will never be sent out without definite orders as to what is required of them. Patrols will go via a listening post (if such exist). All listening posts will be warned of the strength of the patrol and the approximate hour of departure and return. Word will be passed quietly along the line of sentries that a patrol is out in front.

(j) As little challenging as possible will be done by sentries, and then only in a low tone of voice.

The battalion quartermaster, who usually

TRENCH ROUTINE

holds the honorary rank of captain, has charge of all rations and equipment for his battalion. He is assisted in this duty by the battalion quartermaster sergeant, who in turn very often goes to battalion advance headquarters with the rations. During the daytime at battalion rear headquarters or horse lines the quartermaster supervises the distribution of the allotted quantity of rations that is required for each company. All company quartermaster sergeants being present, they in their turn see that their company's amount of rations is safely delivered to the transport officer. The transport officer at night has his small ammunition carts or transports take the rations as near to the support line as is possible, the company quartermaster sergeants going with him. From that point ration parties from the respective companies meet the company quartermaster sergeant, who sees to the proper delivery of the ration. In addition the party may have the mail, ammunition, or any shortages of equipment that may be required, after

HUNTING THE HUN

which each quartermaster sergeant reports to his company headquarters for orders.

In the trenches we often have papers only two or three days old, and the news from them is literally devoured. As this is the only means by which we can find out how the war is going on, all newspapers and periodicals are looked on with great favour in the trenches.

My sergeant reported to me when we were in the front line trench that Private Johnston had swollen feet. I went over to a shallow dugout where I found Johnston with his boots off. One foot in particular was very much swollen and blue. It had been raining hard since we were in the trenches. As we would stand down off the fire step, we would be in mud almost up to our knees. Trench knees were very prevalent at the early stages of the war. At present it is almost a crime for a man to allow himself to get it. Trench feet are caused by the extreme cold due to dampness; and not only dampness and cold, but to the inaction of the feet brought about by the heavy

TRENCH ROUTINE

claying nature of the ground and the weight of the water surrounding the man's boots and legs. It was found that a warm layer of air between the foot and the outer covering was absolutely necessary if trench feet were to be avoided. An oiled silk stocking has been recommended to be placed next to the skin and looser boots and loosened puttees are considered necessary when in the trenches. At present we have long rubber boots that the boys wear when they occupy the trenches. They are considered trench stores and remain there.

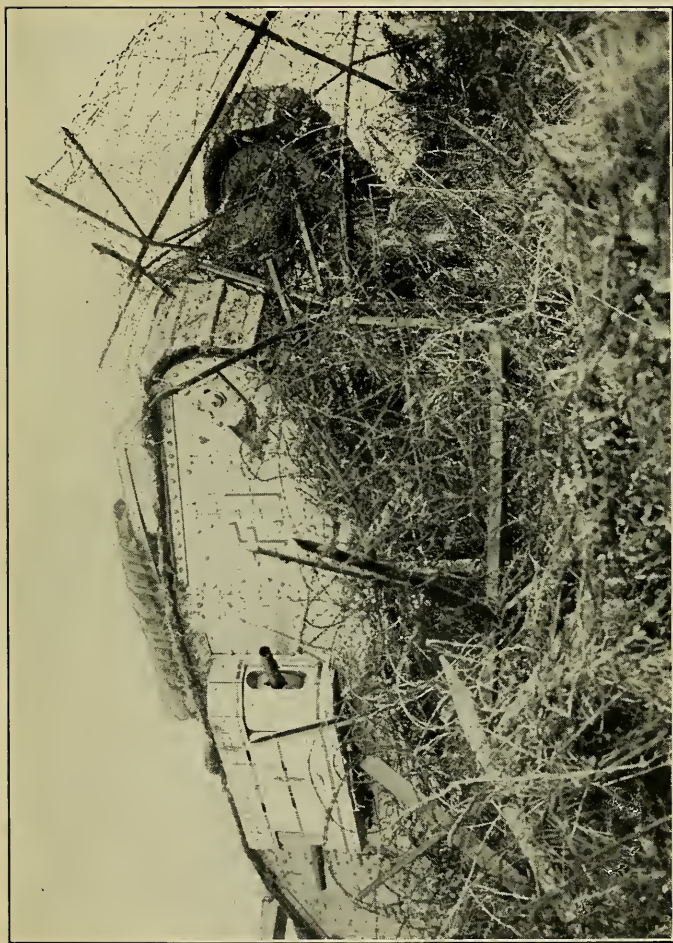
A batman is chosen by an officer to act as his orderly; his duties are many, and wherever the officer goes while in the trenches his batman accompanies him. The higher the rank of the officer the easier the work for the batman and the less the risk, although there are exceptional occasions when a commanding officer takes as much risk as the junior Lieutenant under him. When a platoon officer leads his platoon "over the top" his batman goes with him; he therefore takes the same risk

HUNTING THE HUN

as the other men in the platoon, but he has several privileges that the private has not, such as: after he has attended to the requirements of his officer when out of the line he may spend the balance of his time as he deems fit, he is exempt from sentry and fatigue duties, and as a rule he has a good standing with the boys.

Whilst in the trenches, we receive reports giving us information regarding the movements on the part of the enemy, and also describing the number of shells that the enemy has fired at us and the number that we have fired in return. We also receive a communique that gives us information as to what has happened on the various sectors of the line, and also the result of any battles or raids that we have been participating in. By this we learn how we have been progressing along the whole of the frontage we have fought along.

The splendid attack on April 9th gave us possession of the entire Vimy Ridge with the exception of its extreme northwest point. This the Germans held on to stubbornly and



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

A TANK IN ACTION

TRENCH ROUTINE

were not finally ejected until April 11th. Southward the British passed on down the backward slope of the ridge and seized Farbus and its woods. On April 12th, our army being fairly established on the ridge Sir Douglas Haig pressed home the attack upon Lens. On that day and the following day, despite bad weather, the advance was steadily continued. The villages behind the ridge, Vimy, Givenchy, Angres, Bailleul, Willerval, were taken one after the other and our lines began to close in upon Lens from the northwest. One factor which contributed to our success was undoubtedly the co-operation of the tanks which accompanied the advance. The first appearance of the tanks caused great excitement amongst us, as it also caused consternation and dismay amongst the Germans.

The tank is a factor of the great war and is emblematic of Britain's purpose, slow but relentlessly sure. It lumbers out over the waste of No Man's Land toward the German line, mowing down the enemy with its deadly

HUNTING THE HUN

machine guns and is undeterred by the rifle or machine gun fire of the enemy. It goes crashing on to and over the enemy trenches, going down one side of the shell or mine craters, and up the other, trampling down the strongest of barbed wire entanglements, trees, etc.

As this monster goes on, few Germans are brave enough to face an advancing force. In our advance on Lens the artillery preparation was so perfect that the wire barriers were everywhere swept aside. The German high command made a desperate attempt to divert our advance on Lens by a heavy counterattack along the Cambrai-Bapaume Road, which was delivered by about four divisions. We repulsed it, taking 300 prisoners and inflicting a casualty of some 10,000 of which 1500 were killed; our success was largely due to the artillery.

All officers and men look forward to the delivery of the mail. In the early stages of the war, it was a very common practice for both officers and men that had no lady relatives to

TRENCH ROUTINE

write to the "Agony or Personal Column" of one of the London daily papers, asking for some lady to correspond with them. The ads would read, "Lonely Officer, or Lonely Soldier, would like to correspond with some Young Lady for period of War." Invariably a *nom de plume* and designation of battalion were used, and the result was that a large number of letters were received.

I remember a young officer who put an ad in the paper, and for some days there was no result. The officers all began to tease him and I think he regretted having informed us what he had done. However, one day the mail corporal brought three full mail bags all for the "Lonely Officer." Things began to look lively. He was now in a dilemma. Could he read and answer them all before he would have to go in to the front line? It seemed a stupendous task. He had a few volunteers to help him to read his correspondence, but no one was willing to answer it. For three weeks afterwards there were no letters, then one day

HUNTING THE HUN

Brigade Headquarters post office sent word that there was a transport car coming along with Lieutenant K.'s mail. The car was completely loaded down with his correspondence, so they wished to know what he wanted done with the balance. It was not long afterwards that correspondence from the Agony Column ceased.

The censoring of the mail is sometimes very amusing. Yet it has its pathetic side. I censored a letter from a boy to his mother. He had run away from home, and enlisted under an assumed name. He just had begun to realise that if he was killed in action, his mother would never know, so it was a very penitent son that sent a very loving letter to his mother at home. The war brings out all that is best in the "boys," though some of them are sad rogues as they vow eternal love to many girls at the same time. No harm is meant, I am sure, it is probably to break the monotony of the life in the trenches. Some of the letters have quite a number of crosses

TRENCH ROUTINE

on them, like this xxxxxxxx, denoting kisses, and probably stuck away in one corner we will see one small x with "For the Censor," marked above it.

The reason why all letters in France are censored is to prevent any information of military importance reaching the enemy.

While out at rest our battalion received orders from brigade headquarters to prepare a small raiding party with the object of putting out of action a German machine gun that had given the troops that were then holding the line considerable trouble.

Aerial photographs and map location of the small sector of the German line where the machine gun emplacement was located had been sent us. I was detailed to take charge of the party and was given instructions to destroy this machine gun emplacement and if possible to bring back some prisoners for purpose of information.

I selected ten men including one sergeant and one corporal and for three days we prac-

HUNTING THE HUN

ticed for this raid by going over the tapes and also making use of some previously dug trenches, so that every man would know exactly what part he would take when the actual raid would be pulled off.

These men were equipped just as they would be when the actual raid would take place, four men were armed with rifles and bayonets, the others were armed with bombs and knobkerries and in addition all had their wire cutters.

It is usual for us and also the enemy to have a narrow zigzag passageway through the barbed wire entanglements to afford us an exit for a party going out into No Man's Land. Our battalion scout officer the night previous to the raid had been out doing special reconnaissance along the sector of the German line that we had to raid, and while he was crawling along the edge of their barbed-wire he had discovered the opening. This very valuable information I had received from him.

The second night we were in the front line

TRENCH ROUTINE

trenches I received orders that I was to make the raid that night.

I gave the sergeant the necessary instructions to have the men prepared and ready to leave our line at one A.M. Part of the instructions were that the men were to have their faces blackened and a small white chalk mark on the front of their steel helmets. On the back of each man was a small piece of bright tin about two inches in diameter, fastened on their tunic.

Notices had been sent to the units on our flanks that a raiding party was going out at one A.M.

Two hours' time was allowed us to accomplish this. I took my compass bearings and at one A.M. led the boys in single file through our barbed-wire entanglements into No Man's Land.

The German barbed-wire entanglements were about two hundred and fifty yards away from us. I headed right for where I estimated the

HUNTING THE HUN

opening in the German wire entanglements would be.

As the German flares went up we would try to get into shell holes if possible before they burst. We were not very conspicuous as long as they were bursting ahead of us. The great danger of being observed was when the flares burst behind us.

Our progress over No Man's Land was very slow. Not a word was spoken. I signalled back as pre-arranged to my boys by throwing small clods of earth to the man in rear who passed back the signals to those behind him.

In a previous counterattack the Huns had lost this part of No Man's Land. The result was that quite a number of German dead lay on this particular sector unburied. This was due to the continual artillery activity on both sides.

As we reached the middle of No Man's Land, I raised my head carefully above the lip of a shell hole while a German white flare was up. To my consternation I saw what was

evidently a German battle patrol coming crouching through their barbed-wire. I counted in all twenty-five men.

Things looked ominous for my party, as they outnumbered us over two to one. I had no desire to go back, without accomplishing my mission. Neither did I wish to engage my men in personal conflict with such odds against them. So I sent my scout with a message to the officer who was on duty in our sector of the line and informed him what I had observed. At the same time I asked him to pass the word along to open up a machine gun fire at a point that would get the approaching Hun battle patrol.

It was with mixed feelings of pleasure that I heard our Lewis guns open fire in the required direction, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the approaching Huns beat a hasty retreat, leaving a number of dead and wounded behind them. We waited for what seemed to be hours, in reality it was only fifteen minutes, and then we crawled carefully forward towards

HUNTING THE HUN

the German barbed-wire entanglements. The Huns in their somewhat hasty retreat had forgotten to haul in their white tape line and this was the means that guided us through their barbed-wire. As soon as I got almost through the barbed-wire, I immediately jumped up, my boys doing likewise, and made a rush for the German trench.

Here I discovered a German sentry in the act of loading a pistol to send up a flare. He was so taken by surprise and fear that he immediately held up his hands, mumbling "*Kamerad.*" We at once gagged him. As previously arranged my party divided in two, one-half going to the right under my command and the other to the left in charge of the sergeant. We had no time to lose as their trench mortars might open up at any moment.

I surprised a machine-gun crew and quickly put them out of business with a few Mills bombs. On the left my sergeant surprised and captured two prisoners. We then quickly got out of the trench, pushing our prisoners

TRENCH ROUTINE

ahead of us as we crawled back over No Man's Land. By this time the Germans had discovered the result of our raid and began at once to send up their white flares with great rapidity. In addition their "flying-pigs," "fish-tails," "rum-jars" and "Minnenwerfers" made things very lively for us in No Man's Land. Our prisoners were just as keen to reach our trenches safely as we were. However, we had to remain out on our stomachs in No Man's Land until the white flares had ceased to go up with such rapidity. It seemed a lifetime for me since I had left our trenches, and I began to wonder if I would ever get back to them again. As I heard some of my men moan, I knew that they had been hit, but I knew that our stretcher bearers would soon be out to give them their required attention once we got safely back to our line.

We slowly wormed our way back, and it was very sweet music to my ears to be challenged by our own sentry as we approached the trench. I made myself known, and very

HUNTING THE HUN

soon we were all in and gave the necessary information for stretcher bearers to be sent out. Our casualties were one killed and two slightly wounded.

The information gained from the prisoners was of great importance.

CHAPTER VII

BEHIND THE LINES

ALL front line infantry units in France are, like gypsies, moving all the time. It is seldom we are out at rest at the same place twice inside of six months. Rests are named according to the units that are out of the trenches for that time. Battalion rests may be for seven or ten days; brigade rest may be as long as two weeks; division rest may last one month.

We call the time we are out of the line rest, but in reality we have a strict period of training to undergo. At the same time there is a great deal of amusement, without the danger attached to it that we have when in the trenches.

The boys may start P. T. and B. F. (Physical Training and Bayonet Fighting) for one hour. Then squad and company drill until

HUNTING THE HUN

noon or, if an attack is to take place in the near future, they may be practicing for the same by going over the tapes. In the afternoon they may be given lectures, rifle practice, bombing, or Lewis gun drill. This may continue until about 4:00 P.M., and then they are dismissed for the balance of the day.

The Y. M. C. A. usually has moving picture theatres nearby for the benefit of the troops in that vicinity. Football, baseball and boxing also play a prominent part in keeping the men fit. In the evening there may be a good concert given by the Y. M. C. A., probably winding up by a church service. Thus the spiritual welfare of the boys is looked after. Spare moments are spent writing letters.

During one of our rests at the little village called Villers-au-Bois, the Town Major, who was a captain in one of the Imperial battalions, after he had his staff get our officers and men the necessary accommodation, informed us that the Middlesex battalion had been in these

BEHIND THE LINES

billets a short time after the First Expeditionary Force had landed in France.

When the First British Expeditionary Force landed in France, some famous regiments came over with it. Among these were the Middlesex regiment and the famous Scotch regiment, "The Black Watch." As the Black Watch marched through the small French village, the following dialogue took place between two old Frenchmen who saw them approaching. The elder of the two turned to his companion and said in the patois of the region: "Then it is true that Angleterre has no men! So she is sending out the womans to fight!" The other Frenchman replied: "No, no—they are not womans—for they have got moustaches." "*Sacré, Sacré,*" replied his friend, "I have it! This is the famous Middlesex regiment."

During our rest at this small village, we had Canadian corps sports, which were organised by the Y. M. C. A. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th divisions had all their representatives.

HUNTING THE HUN

The latter division had only a few units in the field, but it seemed to pull down the most honours. This division has since been broken up and used to reinforce the other four. Major-General Currie and his staff were present, as were all the Canadian troops that were out of the line and not on duty. Our sports consisted of running, short and long distance, baseball, and football, the usual athletic performances. It was here that I saw Tom Longboat, the famous Indian runner, compete, but he was beaten for first place in a five-mile race by another Indian.

About six o'clock the same evening I noticed our observation balloons were up. These balloons were about four miles behind our trenches and three miles or so apart. They were taking advantage of the very clear weather for observation purposes along the German lines and back areas.

It may not be out of place to describe an observation balloon. This is a captive balloon fastened sometimes to a motor truck by long

BEHIND THE LINES

stout ropes, and may be hauled along the road, if the Germans commence to shell them with their explosive shells. The balloon is composed of one elongated ballonette, inflated with hydrogen or some other kind of light gas. A second internal ballonette is inflated with air, which is required in order to maintain the shape of the balloon. By means of the keel at the end, the balloon is oriented to the wind. On a clear day the observation balloon rises to a height of 200 to 400 yards and remains up for several hours, being occasionally pulled down to relieve the observation officer who takes his position in the *nacelle* or basket beneath the balloon. From there he reports enemy movements by telephone to headquarters.

I was watching an aeroplane flying very high in our direction and, as our anti-aircraft shells were bursting beneath it, the little white puffs of smoke of the shells' burst indicated to us that the aeroplane was a Hun machine. Nothing seemed to daunt the aviator and as

HUNTING THE HUN

he hovered over the observation balloon on my right I heard his machine gun firing. A few bombs were dropped and the balloon took fire.

The observation officer in the meantime had jumped out of his basket. He began to fall through space until his parachute opened. Then we witnessed a thrilling race as the burning balloon and the officer in his parachute began to descend to the ground, pursued by the Hun aviator who was using his machine gun on the unfortunate observation officer. Luckily the observation officer got safely to the ground.

The next target of this daring Hun aviator was the observation balloon in front of where we were standing. The observation officer immediately jumped out of his basket and got safely down to the ground. The Hun aviator, however, destroyed this balloon and then retired back to his lines, evidently having used up all of his bombs. He came back an hour later and destroyed a third balloon, but this time his daring was nipped in the bud as he

BEHIND THE LINES

was brought down by one of our anti-aircraft shells somewhere near one of our rear support lines. One of his hands had been shattered so that he was unable to manipulate his levers. The boys had no sooner taken him prisoner and got him clear of his machine than the German artillery opened up and with a shell blew his aeroplane to pieces. It must be understood that our aeroplanes cannot be everywhere at the same time. They had evidently gone on a mission to some other locality and the Huns had probably been aware of this fact. Hence the audacity of this aviator.

Later the same evening I was walking along the Villers-au-Bois and Carency Road when I heard the drone of an aeroplane behind me. I turned round and saw an aeroplane flying very fast and low. I was at that time in the centre of the road. On both sides were tents occupied by the men of an artillery battery who were also out at rest. Suddenly I heard three loud reports and knew at once the Hun was dropping bombs. As I imprudently

HUNTING THE HUN

glanced up in the air I could see the aviator leaning over the side of his plane and the Maltese Cross on the wings, as he turned his machine gun upon the tents around me. The observation officer was firing what we called a "chaser" bullet. These bullets at dusk or night show a reddish streak as they travel through the air, giving the aviator an idea of the direction of his fire. There is usually one chaser bullet to every five cartridges. However, this aviator was soon brought down by our anti-aircraft picket, which was waiting for him. As he was flying low they had no trouble in bringing his machine down.

In the early part of July I arrived at a little place called Bully-Grenay. This town had a population of about 2,000 and was almost four miles from Lens. We had to be very careful how we approached it as we were within easy shelling distance from the Germans as well as easily observable by them. This town had not suffered very much from shell fire. One of our Majors, whose turn it was to remain

BEHIND THE LINES

out of the line, had been sent with an advance party to see about our billets. I was left behind in charge of the rear party with instructions to have all billets cleaned up that we had occupied so that the next battalion that came in would find them all right.

Later on, when I reached this town, I saw the Major surrounded by a crowd of women. I approached to see what was the matter and then saw one woman gesticulating and shaking her fist at the Major. He, poor fellow, could not understand the reason of this unnecessary excitement.

After saluting, I asked him what was the matter. He informed me that the Town Major had given him the names of the various civilians who could accommodate officers and men, and as this lady's name was on the list he had asked her to clean up her room for an officer. She had resented this very much, as she thought her rooms were extra clean. The Major's poor French had evidently been misunderstood. I spoke to the lady in French

HUNTING THE HUN

and tried to smooth matters over. She kept a little store which was named "*Le Pauvre Diable*" or "Poor Devil."

After I had bought a few post-cards Madame told me that I could have the room. She also informed me that the Germans often shelled the railway station which was not more than 150 yards away from her store.

That same afternoon we were informed that our battalion was coming out of the line. As it is customary for us to buy extra rations for the boys when they come out of the trenches and as I was secretary of the canteen, the Colonel authorised me to have something good ready for the tired and weary men when they would arrive at about 3:00 A.M. in the morning. A sufficient number of names had not been given of the civilians who had accommodation for officers. Therefore, the battalion being short of one billet for an officer, I volunteered to give up my billet to this officer when he should come out of the line. I therefore told my hostess I would be obliged

BEHIND THE LINES

to leave, saying that Lieutenant S—— would take over my room. Madame would not hear of this, insisting upon my accepting her room. So she and her daughter slept downstairs. Later on, when the battalion arrived in the small hours of the morning, and after each officer had seen that his men had received a good meal and all been accommodated properly in their billets, they in turn had something to eat, afterwards going to bed.

There was very little to do the next day, but we had three men wounded as they were in the street near the railway station. The Huns were aiming at this station in the expectation of probably hitting some French coal and ammunition trains as they came into it. The following night as I lay awake in bed I could hear a whistling noise as the German shells passed over our house. I judged they were going in the direction of Les Brébis, about half a mile beyond Bully-Grenay.

Suddenly, when everything was quiet, I heard a loud explosion. A crump had struck

HUNTING THE HUN

the railway station. Madame from downstairs shouted to the other officer and me that there was no danger as the Germans were only firing at the usual target, the railway station.

On July 10th, as we were out on our training ground practising for an attack, we observed some German aeroplanes. But our anti-aircraft pickets had also observed them and soon drove them away.

In the afternoon as we marched back to the billets, I noticed that during our absence several batteries of artillery had come into this little town and were then busy firing at the Boche line. When I returned to my billet that evening Madame told me that one of the guns that had been firing was situated in the rear of her house. This appeared to frighten her very much.

About 2:00 A.M. in the morning we were all awakened by a very loud explosion. All the window panes were blown out and the glass of the small conservatory was smashed to atoms. Madame, in a very excited tone of

BEHIND THE LINES

voice, shouted to us to come downstairs at once, not forgetting to bring our gas helmets. We went outside to see about our men's safety, then returned. After dressing very hastily we descended the stairs and were led by Madame and her daughter to the cellar which was rather shallow, not more than ten feet deep and about ten feet wide. There were some provisions stored in the cellar and in the corner a small stove and a coal bin, a few chairs and a bed.

In the course of conversation Madame informed us that her husband and another daughter had been prisoners in the hands of the Germans since 1914. At the time they had been taken prisoners they had been on a visit to Lille. They were returning to Bully-Grenay when they were cut off by the Germans. She had not received any news and did not know whether they were alive or dead at that time. There are many families in France in this predicament, and the torture of these poor people is quite pitiful.

The shelling ceased about daybreak and I

HUNTING THE HUN

was glad to get out of the cellar, as it really afforded very little protection. If a shell had struck the house one was liable to be killed by the falling masonry. Lieutenant S—— and myself went over to the billets that our men were in and found them all safe, after which we returned to our own billet.

The inhabitants of little villages and towns near the firing line all take risks of this kind. Many of them are killed, but they seem to cling to their homes whilst they have a possible chance to do so. The children when they go to school carry gas masks, which they use when required, as they never know when the Germans will send over gas shells.

CHAPTER VIII

THE "BULL RING"

NEAR a certain town "somewhere in France" there is a large training ground that is called the "bull ring." Here men from the Imperial, Canadian, Australian and Newfoundland Forces are trained and instructed in the various branches of the service.

The "bull ring" is about two miles square and is divided into sections. Each section is allotted for the purpose of training a large number of men in special branches of the service such as bayonet fighting, physical training, bombing, trench warfare, musketry, wiring, machine gunnery, topography, military engineering and the use of the gas mask.

The training for the gas masks is very simple. Each man is trained to adjust his mask in a few seconds. After that he is tested, with

HUNTING THE HUN

the gas mask on, by going through a small hut that is filled up with lachrymatory gas about four times the strength of any gas that the Huns would be likely to send over.

During the summer of 1917 the camp contained about 80,000 men of the first British Army. In the morning each depot battalion would send its men to the "bull ring" for training. They would usually arrive about 8:30 A.M. and would work up till noon. Then would break off to fall in again probably about two. After that, an hour and a half was devoted to lectures, etc. They would be marched back again about 3:30 P.M. to their respective headquarters.

The training camp was admirably arranged, as it brought in close contact the soldiers of the Commonwealth and the Dominions with those of the Motherland.

Discipline plays a very important part in the training of the soldier. Great care is taken to teach the men to salute properly. The officers in turn must return the soldier's

THE "BULL RING"

salute in the prescribed manner. Each officer salutes his senior. A well disciplined battalion is easily recognised by the smart manner in which the members salute.

The men must be shaved every morning, shoes shined and buttons polished. Everything about them must be spick and span. They must also appear in full fighting order. Standing steady in the ranks must be strictly adhered to and all movements in drill must be done with snap and precision. The small box respirators and P.H. helmets (gas helmets) are often used during the P.T. and B.F. (physical training and bayonet fighting). We also march on the training ground wearing small box respirators and P.H. helmets alternately. This accustoms the men to the use of the gas helmet.

Boxing plays a prominent part in the training of our soldiers, and is a great help in the bayonet fighting, as it teaches the men the quickness of eye and movement, which is as

HUNTING THE HUN

essential for a good boxer as it is for a good bayonet fighter.

One of the many games that is a source of amusement and very popular with the boys is known by the name of "McGrady." It is very simple but it affords the boys a great deal of pleasure. The instructor forms the men in a circle around him, each man being armed with his rifle and bayonet with scabbard on. He then explains to them this very simple game which gets their interest and also causes them to concentrate their minds. The instructor will then say, "McGrady says, '*Do this,*'" and he then makes a point with the bayonet, all his class doing the same.

If, however, he says, "McGrady says, '*Do that,*'" he will probably make a short point and no one must move. If any man has made a short point he must come out in the centre, take the instructor's place and try to catch someone else off his guard. It is just the difference in the words "This" and "That," and all depends upon the cleverness of the

THE "BULL RING"

instructor in being able to tell the tale to divert the men's minds and be able to catch them off their guard.

Many of the soldiers who were undergoing training here had been wounded and, after being passed as physically fit for the front again, were trained with men who had never been up the line.

In some cases they were given instruction by an instructor who had never been in the front line. Now when a soldier is wounded his name appears on the casualty list. He is allowed to put on his left sleeve a narrow gold stripe for each time he has been wounded, and the Tommy is very sensitive about taking instructions from anyone who has not these stripes. One incident that was brought to my notice will show how sensitive Tommy is as to whom he has instructing him.

A certain sergeant, who had been gassed at Ypres, had also been fighting in various other battles but, luckily for him, he had never been wounded. Therefore, he could not wear the

HUNTING THE HUN

stripe. He was giving instruction to the class on gas drill. Nearly all the class were wearing a gold stripe for wounds received.

I was in the lecture room when the sergeant commenced his lecture, but subsequently I was called away for a few minutes. Upon my return I discovered that the lecture was practically at a standstill. All the Tommies had turned their backs on the sergeant and would not listen to him. They thought he had never been up the line and they resented very much taking instruction from one who, in their opinion, had had a bomb-proof job. I asked the sergeant what was the matter, and he told me that he thought his class was under the impression that he had not been up the line. I therefore allowed him, before proceeding with the lecture, to relate some of his experiences at the front. After that he had no further trouble with that class.

After a certain length of time training at the "bull ring," the men are drafted and ordered to go up the line to reinforce battalions

THE "BULL RING"

at the front. I was given charge of a draft of 200 men. The men selected were duly warned to fall in on the following morn at 7.00 A.M. at their respective parade grounds. They were all delighted and, as most of them had never heard a shot fired, they were anxious and keen to go up the line. By 7:30 the next morning I had inspected the men carefully. Afterwards they were inspected by the adjutant and the colonel. Each man, I may say, had his full fighting kit on.

After a brief speech by the Colonel we marched to the railway station. As we approached the station the French soldiers, who were guarding the German prisoners that were working on the railway tracks, sprang to attention and shouted, "*Bon Voyage, Bon Voyage.*" When I arrived at the station the railway transport officer met me and pointed out the cars that we were to occupy. There was a canteen at the station run by some English ladies, who were serving the men with cakes and dainty slices of bread and butter

HUNTING THE HUN

and tea or cocoa. The ladies were all very refined and were not paid for their services. They seemed to take a great deal of pleasure in making the soldiers happy and contented.

As we would proceed along the railway and approach a nearby town the little French children would shout out, "*Bon Voyage, Bon Voyage*, Bully Beef, Bully Beef, Biscuit, Biscuit."

Our boys would throw them out the rations, which would be picked up quickly by the poor French children. Upon arrival at the rail-head each man would turn in all the extra food he had not eaten and would then be marched to the depot to be assigned to billets for the night. In the morning the various drafts would be sorted out and sent to reinforce their fighting units.

Here is an incident that occurred whilst I was in charge of a party at the "bull ring." A sergeant was giving a lecture on musketry to a class. He began in this strain: "The rifle is a soldier's best friend on active service."

THE "BULL RING"

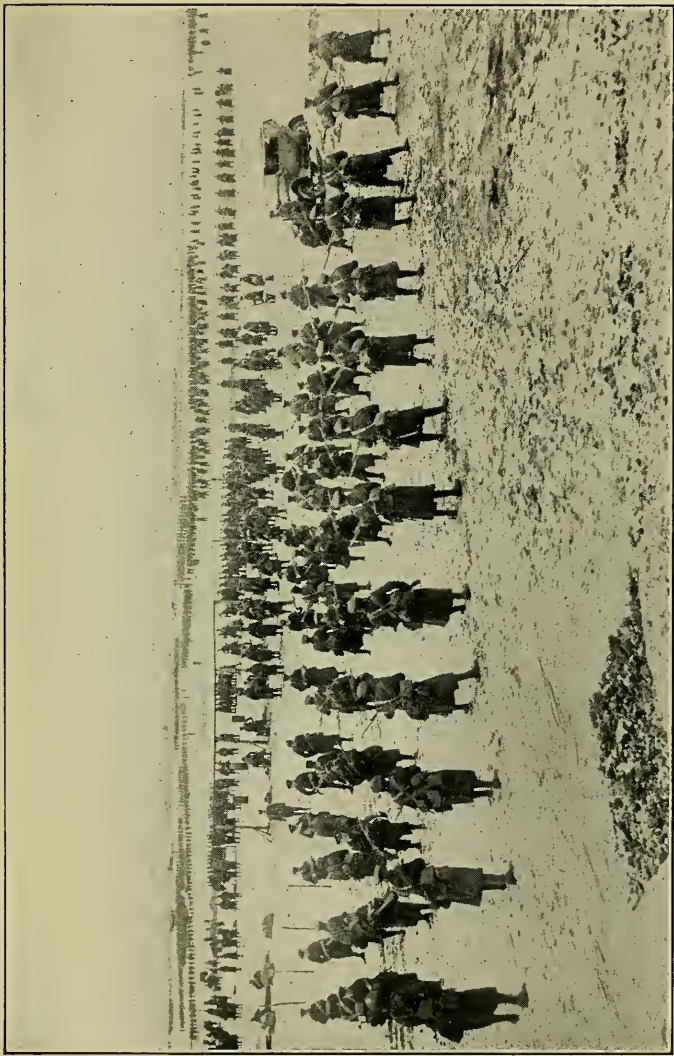
After that he described the length of the rifle, the length of the barrel, the muzzle velocity, the calibre of the ammunition used, the width of the lands, the depth of the grooves, and the mechanism of the bolt. He began to describe the care of arms. To emphasize his point, he repeated: "The rifle is the soldier's best friend and I want you to *treat it as such. Treat it as you would treat your wife. Rub it well over with an oily rag.*" This caused a decided grin on the faces of the married men in the ranks.

We take great pains to train our men in machine gunnery. A barrage of machine guns on any part of the line is always dangerous to the enemy and is advantageous to us. Usually a barrage may be laid at distances from a thousand to five hundred yards. The cone of fire is very deadly, but when it gets as near as five hundred yards the trajectory, being flat or low, is then dangerous to us if we stand up, so that we have to be very careful how we work under it.

HUNTING THE HUN

No soldiers in the world are fit to cope with the British soldier in bayonet fighting. Their training is intensive, and a man must be physically fit in every respect to be good at this element of warfare. A good boxer is usually a good bayonet fighter, and I notice that in the U. S. National Army there is great attention being paid to boxing as a means of making the men proficient at this game.

I remember an amusing incident which took place in the "bull ring." We had our bags suspended from horizontal bars by strong cords. These cords had a thin piece of twine tied between each bag. The bayonet fighters were placed in a trench, and at the word "Go," they had to run a distance of about fifty yards, jump over another trench, and make a lunge with a bayonet at the bag. One man, who did not notice this twine which was between the bags, made his lunge, then ran between the bags and did not stoop. The twine caught him right on the point of the nose, taking all the skin off it, and throwing him back into



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

BAYONET EXERCISE AT A TRAINING GROUND SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE

THE "BULL RING"

the trench. He could not realise how he had been thrown there, and it was only after he had been assisted out of the trench and was led up to the bags that he believed he had not been assaulted by some of his fellow soldiers. He said afterwards he never noticed the string between the bags.

Particular attention is given to all musketry instruction. This subject is always interesting to lecture on. I was giving a lecture one day on what we call the use of combined sights, which is only used when a platoon or company fires at a range of a thousand yards or over and they are not sure of the exact range. For instance, if I wanted the men to fire at a given target, I would give a fire order as under:—

No. 1 and 2. Platoons at 1050.

No. 3 and 4. Platoons at 1150. Five rounds rapid fire.

I do not use the term yards, because it is understood that 1050 means 1050 yards and 1150 means 1150 yards. We would thus have

HUNTING THE HUN

a range of a hundred yards between each platoon's fire, so we would be almost sure to get the enemy in the intervening range.

I was taking my class in instruction and asked each man in his turn to give "Fire Order." I was rather surprised when I heard a voice describe very minutely the target, but giving the range as follows:—

No. 1 and 2. Platoons at half past ten.

No. 3 and 4. Platoons at half past eleven.
Five rounds rapid fire.

I looked round at my pupil and asked him if he meant No. 1 and 2 to fire at half past ten, and numbers 3 and 4 at half past eleven. He said, "Yes, sir. You gave your fire order 10:50 and 11:50." I then had to explain to him that my order meant yards, not time, and that his time scheme would give the enemy time to retreat to Berlin before firing commenced.

Physical training or, as it is called in the army, P.T., is the first thing that a soldier has to undergo to make him fit for the arduous life of a soldier.

THE "BULL RING"

One of the soldiers who was at the "bull ring" was a rather stout block of a man. His comrades called him "Shorty." He weighed over 200 pounds and his flesh was very soft, and when at P.T. I heard him groan many a time when he had to get down on his hands and feet, stretch himself full length without allowing his chest to touch the ground, and then raise himself up and down on his hands. Poor "Shorty" must have been in physical torture, but we had to reduce him in flesh, and he was game. When he had to lie flat on his back, and raise his feet into the air, keeping his hands on the ground without moving the body, it was very trying. It looked simple and it is simple, but when a man weighs over 200 pounds, raising the feet from the thighs upwards and keeping the other portion of the body level on the ground is no sinecure. However, "Shorty" stuck to it. Then we had races one day for money prizes. Someone asked "Shorty" to enter the race. He said, "Yes, all right, I will, if I can get the limit

HUNTING THE HUN

in your handicap." This was assented to, and "Shorty" entered.

When the time for the race arrived, he came out on the track in his canvas slippers and a pair of old khaki overalls. Everyone laughed at the idea of "Shorty's" running in this race. Certainly his appearance was against him as a sprint runner. I asked him how he fancied his chances were in his heat, and he said, "Fine, sir, I can win easy." I believed him, although others laughed uproariously.

When the heat was ready to be run, just as they were getting on their marks, "Shorty" shouted out, "You fellows behind can get a good view of me as I break the tape." "Rats, Rats," his fellow competitors shouted, "get on your mark."

When they were all on their marks, the starter told them to get set. "Shorty" got down in a very professional manner. He had made two small toe holes in the ground, and with his body bent to the ground he was all

THE "BULL RING"

ready when the pistol went off. "Shorty" was away like a shot out of a gun.

Run! Why he seemed to fly for a short distance! All at once he slowed down and placed his hand to his side, but all the same he painfully got home first. Then he collapsed. The other runners were all curious and could not understand how he had beaten them, but he laid it down to the physical training, expressing grave doubts as to whether he would be fit for the final. The final heat came along, and "Shorty" turned out in his overalls. Somehow or other he had managed to dig up a pair of running pumps and he sprinted around on them quite lively. Eventually all the competitors got on their marks, but just before the starter got them away "Shorty" shouted out, "Halloa, you fellows in the rear, have you any news to send to your friends? Because if you have I would like to carry it along for you."

This time there was a growl from the other finalists, who told him that he would see their

HUNTING THE HUN

dust. After a lot of badinage they all got set, and the pistol cracked. "Shorty" came home an easy winner, looking around at the other competitors. He could have given a start to any one of them and beaten them badly.

Later on we found out he was an old time champion sprinter.

In the training for "bombing" many people think that baseball players are the best men for this kind of work. This is not so. The man who has been used to bowling at cricket is the better man. Bombs are thrown in what we would call a lobbing or overhead throw. I have seen many baseballers throw the bombs in the same manner in which they would throw the baseball, and have in a few instances seen their shoulders dislocated in throwing. The cricketer on the other hand had the natural and easiest manner of throwing the ball. Great attention should be paid to bombing.

Every soldier should have the rudiments of learning in this branch of the service, as it is

THE "BULL RING"

essential that all soldiers should learn to read a map and be able to draw a sketch of any trench or sector of the line which they may occupy.

I remember examining some sketches that had been made by men who had been given an outpost scheme in which they had to place what we call our sentry groups, picquets, etc. One sketch that was submitted to me showed a tree here and there on the sketch, but nowhere could I see anything that looked like a road or even like an outpost. I had the sketcher brought to me and asked him where his outpost was. His reply was rather staggering. He said, "Isn't it true, sir, that outposts must keep under cover, so that no one can observe them." I said, "Yes, certainly, that is true, but still I cannot see your outposts." He said, "No, sir, it is under cover, I did not put it on the paper as I did not want it to be observed."

CHAPTER IX

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

WHAT is the Red Cross?

It is the world's international ideal of mercy. It knows no bounds of racial, religious or political separation. Wherever and whenever war, pestilence, storm, flood or disaster has wrought suffering, want or distress, there it has gone and brought relief, with the ready hands of unselfish aid.

Who first organised relief for those wounded, sick, or neglected on the field of battle? The Knights Hospitallers first had the idea, which had its birth in the Hospital of St. John at Jerusalem. Although driven out of the Holy Land by the Moslems, this institution re-established itself at Malta and is still in existence.

What nation first organised such relief?

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

Great Britain, during the Crimean war, sent Florence Nightingale in 1854 to the hospitals of Scutari. When Miss Nightingale with thirty-eight other nurses reached Scutari she found pest houses, rather than hospitals, with open sewers beneath the buildings. Contagious cases were taken in by the thousands. So successful was Miss Nightingale in bringing order out of chaos that she is recognised to-day as one of the greatest individual organisers of war relief.

Who first conceived such service on an international basis?

Henri Dunant, a Swiss physician on the battlefield of Solferino, Italy, in 1859 organised a group of volunteers to help administer to the wounded. At that time great confusion and consequent inefficiency prevailed because of the multiplicity of relief flags. As a result of these experiences and under the inspiration of the work of Florence Nightingale, Doctor Dunant formulated the first proposals for an international organisation to care

HUNTING THE HUN

for the sick and wounded in time of war. He suggested two years later to the Geneva Society of Public Utilities a single and uniform hospital flag for all nations. In 1864 an international conference of 14 nations was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The outcome of this was the treaty of Geneva, known as the Red Cross Treaty.

What in brief does the Red Cross Treaty provide?

That hospital formations and their personnel should be treated as neutrals. That each nation signing the treaty should have an association of volunteers to assist and supplement the medical services of its army. But the emblem of service coming to all nations should be a cross of red on a field of white. This emblem, which is the Swiss flag with the colours reversed, was adopted in recognition of the fact that Dr. Dunant was Swiss and that the Red Cross was founded at Geneva.

What is the Red Cross doing in France for the soldiers?

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

There are two distinct phases of Red Cross relief work for soldiers on duty. The operating of rolling canteens and the maintaining of stationary canteens back of the fighting line is one. It is a most daring yet essential work, this of operating rolling canteens. Often a soldier leaves the trench utterly exhausted. The rolling canteen goes right down to the communicating trenches, where the soldiers passing in and out receive their quarts of steaming bouillon or coffee in winter, and cold drinks in summer.

At junction points on the French railroads troops going on leave from the battle front often have to spend hours waiting for trains. Since there are probably not more than half a dozen important junctions and an average of 20,000 men pass each one per day, only a small fraction of them could be accommodated. Formerly thousands had to sleep in the open, often in the rain. These men come from the fighting zone tired, hungry and infected. It is for such emergency that the stationary can-

HUNTING THE HUN

teen is conducted. At the canteen the men can obtain at cost price substantial hot meals that have been prepared by the ladies. They can have hot baths and get their clothes cleaned and sterilised, so that they take the train refreshed in body and spirit. As the number of soldiers in France grows, the canteen will necessarily become a greater factor and will be most potent in maintaining the morale of our army.

If you can't go to war, you can pay to alleviate the sufferings of those who are fighting. I want you to take an imaginary journey over the battle front with me.

We are now in the midst of the most fierce fighting of this great war. Think of the worst earthquakes and floods that would shock you at home, multiply the horror of your impressions a hundredfold, and you will come near to the horrors of the Marne. Multiply this a thousandfold and you have the ferocity of the battles of the Acre and Somme. At the

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

present time we are in the midst of the great big battle of the war.

Think of the devastation by fire in France, where villages and woods and pasture lands are completely wiped out of existence. Not a house, church or tree is left standing where once there were thousands of families living in a condition as prosperous and happy as anywhere in the world. Think of the ruins by floods and shell fire in Flanders, and think of the stench of thousands of carcasses, human and animal, poisoning the atmosphere for miles around for those who must stay in the trenches. Then turn your mind to some great engagement and try to realise long trenches of men, writhing in torture from poisonous gas or liquid fire, of soldiers smashed and disfigured by shell wounds, their lacerations as indescribable as their heroism is undaunted. If you think of these things, you will not refuse to pay your contributions to the Red Cross. For the Red Cross relieves this suffering.

HUNTING THE HUN

Now leave the trenches, and retire behind the firing line with me. Here we are on roads that are lined with men on stretchers—some dead, scores mortally wounded, hundreds and hundreds of casualties in all states of collapse. The middle of the roadway is filled with dozens of ambulances after every action. There is perhaps a mile's length of hospital trains waiting in the siding to convey the wounded to base hospitals.

And all this purgatory of pain is dependent for relief upon the skill of our doctors, the tenderness of our nurses, the efficiency of our equipment; all of which means is dependent upon the generosity of the public.

May I not take it for granted that, just as the fighting manhood of the United States is soon to be with us in the trenches, so you of the Red Cross who have done so much for us in the past are now eager to be mobilised in the Allied Army of Mercy. I assume that your organisation is coming with us in increased numbers, and with increased equipment, if

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

necessary to the mountains above and around Salonika, to the Plains of Egypt, to East Africa, to the waterless waste of Mesopotamia, to France, Flanders, and Italy.

I have left untouched all the work of caring for the homeless and starving population now being daily released from the bondage of over three years' servitude. It is, of course, for your great hearted public to decide whether and when and how they can best intervene in this area of human desolation. I can, however, specify in detail a few of the objects in which your money can usefully be spent. We have base hospitals running into hundreds in France and England, advance base hospitals and special hospitals for convalescents, for cripples, or the blind, for face cases and homes for the permanently disabled. We have hospital ships on the English Channel, in the Mediterranean, on the Adriatic and on the Tigris. We have hospital trains in England, France and Egypt; hundreds of motor ambulances in all our theatres of war, with repair

HUNTING THE HUN

cars and other necessary equipment. There are thousands of doctors, nurses, orderlies, etc., to be clothed and fed. There are canteens of Red Cross men, rest homes for nurses, worn out by hard work and ceaseless activity. We provide, of course, hospital clothing, drugs, dressings all in enormous quantities for equipment and reserve. These reserves are for ever being replenished at an ever rising price and cost.

When a man is wounded the Red Cross is immediately with him.

The stretcher bearer takes him from the front line trenches to the regimental aid post, where the battalion or medical officer is stationed. The next step leads to the advanced dressing station. Sometimes during a battle this may be the Y. M. C. A. hut. At the advanced dressing station he passes out of the hands of his regiment into the care of the R. A. M. C. (Royal Army Medical Corps). Here he may stay in a farm house, barn or a bomb-proof structure.

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

From here he will be taken by an ambulance a few miles away to a field ambulance station. This station may be in huts or tents, and is probably receiving wounded from four or five dressing stations. After that the wounded man goes to the casualty clearing station and finally, if the case is bad enough, to the base hospital. When he is fit to move again, he will be placed on board ship and brought over to a hospital in England. As he slowly recovers he is taken out for pleasant drives, and everything is done to make his time in the hospital pass quickly. The attention given by the Red Cross nurses is simply splendid and it is no wonder that the boys often sing the song, "I don't want to get well."

A kind old lady was visiting one of the hospitals in England. She was shown through a ward, where a number of wounded soldiers were lying in bed. Being of an inquisitive turn of mind, she asked one of the soldiers how he felt. His reply to her was, "I am not so bad, Lady." She then asked him

HUNTING THE HUN

if he had accounted for many Germans, and his reply was: "I dunno, I did my best."

She then went to the next cot and asked the soldier in it the same questions. His reply to her first question was: "I feel damn rotten." This did not appear to shock the old lady, as she had previously heard of some of this kind of soldierly language. However, she was not deterred, and asked him how many Germans that he had accounted for. His reply was very startling. "When I was in my first attack, I was very savage, and all at once my pal, Bill, shouts out, 'Shike your bynet (bayonet), Tom! Shike your bynet, Tom! You have got five of the Bleeders on.' "

The old lady left the hospital highly delighted with the prowess of the cockney soldier.

The Y. M. C. A. is doing wonderful work for the boys at the front. It not only looks after the spiritual, moral and physical welfare of the boys, but it also provides amusements and sports, moving pictures and good concerts in which the fair sex are represented by a few

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

of the boys dressed up in very attractive and lady-like costumes. The reason boys are substituted for the part of girls is due to the fact that no ladies are allowed to come within the danger zone. However, we try to fool ourselves into believing that these imitations are the real thing, and at a distance they certainly look it. But your illusion is quickly dispelled on a closer examination of their hands and feet, which are too large and muscular for pretty young girls.

The Y. M. C. A. officials give good advice to the "boys" at all times. Here they are supplied with pen, ink and note paper to write home. In one particular Y. M. C. A. that I visited I noticed an inscription which read as follows: "Write home to Mother to-day. She is anxiously awaiting your letter."

The officials of the Y. M. C. A. have not always what we call a "bomb-proof job"; that is to say, one that is immune from shell fire. In the town of Bully-Grenay, a distance of four and one half miles from Lens, the Y. M.

HUNTING THE HUN

C. A. officials occupy a house in which they have a club for officers. A short distance from it they have two large camouflaged tents for the boys. The Boche very often shells this town, and the inhabitants who still persist in remaining there, together with the Y. M. C. A. staff, are in constant danger. One day a shell exploded in the garden of the Y. M. C. A. Officers' Club. It broke every window in the building near by, and a large piece of the shell is hung over their counter as a memento of the occasion.

It was in this town Captain Campbell, our quartermaster, and his batman were killed by a German H. E. shell (high explosive). Captain Campbell was quietly eating his dinner in a room of his billet, quite close to the Y. M. C. A.

There is a town called Lievin about two miles from Lens, which, previous to the war, had a population of over twenty-two thousand inhabitants. It was taken by the Germans who held it until the month of April, 1917.

THE RED CROSS AND THE Y. M. C. A.

We recaptured it from them at that time. Nothing remains of Lievin at the present time but a few bare walls here and there to show that a town existed at one time. In the middle of one of the streets we had a support trench. In the basement of a large building, close to a corner which we called "Whizz Bang Corner," on account of the number of shells that the Huns fired in this locality, was the entrance to the Y. M. C. A. hut.

This particular Y. M. C. A. had been used as a regimental aid post for the wounded. We had several batteries of our artillery in Lievin, so it is needless to say that strafing was going on continually between them and the enemy.

Under the circumstances you will see that it is unjust to think that the Y. M. C. A. secretaries hold down "bomb-proof jobs."

CHAPTER X

SOME TRENCH SONGS

WHEN the singing soldiers of the First British Expeditionary Force marched to the slaughter at Mons in the fall of 1914 singing "Tipperary," they established a precedent which the troops from all parts of the British Empire have maintained. The Canadians were quick to learn the value of songs to fighting men, and some of the many they have given voice to in Flanders are here set down. Most of the parodies were acquired from that redoubtable soldier, Tommy Atkins. Some of them are the invention of Canadian soldier-minstrels.

When the first Canadian division landed in France they marched to Armentières singing, to the tune of "Marching Through Georgia":

SOME TRENCH SONGS

"Hurrah, hurrah, we'll get you, Kaiser Bill;
Hurrah, hurrah, your cup of joy we'll spill;
The day that you have toasted will be hell let loose
when we
All go marching through Germany."

Moving west from Fleurbaix to Ypres they sang to the air of "Good-Bye, My Bluebell," as they marched:—

"Good-bye, old Germany, farewell to you,
You'll have no Kaiser when the war is through.
You'll have no army, no shot and shell,
Good-bye, old Germany—and go to——"

There they switched—to please the padre—and chorused gleefully:—

"You're in the army now,
You're in the army now,
You son of a gun, you'll never be 'done,
You're in the army now."

What happened to the first Canadian division at Ypres during the two weeks following the first gas attack made by the Germans (April 15-22) is an old, and glorious story in the annals of Canadian bravery. The High-

HUNTING THE HUN

land brigade went into the blood-drenched salient to the lilt of:—

“Sing a song of bonny Scotland.”

They sang little during the slaughter-pregnant, fight-full days and nights which followed; but at the first halt following their departure from that section of the line (May 5-15), one brave heart sang:—

(Air—Sing Me to Sleep.)

“Far, far from Ypres, I want to be,
Where German snipers cannot get me;
Think of me crouching, where the shells shriek,
Praying for sergeant to sing me to sleep.”

During the fierce fighting at Festubert, towards the end of that month, they had learned the trench classic:—

(Sung mock seriously.)

“I want to go home, I want to go home,
The bullets they rattle, the cannon they roar,
I don't want to go up any more.
Take me over the seas,
Where the Alleman' cannot get me,
Oh, my, I don't want to die,
I want to go Home.”

SOME TRENCH SONGS

About that time they realised that there was little good in the jam issued to the troops in the field, so they joined in with the soldiers of the Imperial Army when those cheery fellows sang:—

“Tickler’s Jam, Tickler’s Jam,
How I love old Tickler’s Jam;
Sent from England in one pound pots,
Packed it is in ten ton lots;
Every night when I’m asleep,
I’m dreaming that I am
Forcing my way through the Dardanelles,
With a pot of Tickler’s Jam.”

Next month they dared to carol (from the “Duck’s Bill” salient at Givenchy) with “Fritz” only forty yards away:—

(Air—Hold Your Hand Out, Naughty Boy.)

“Keep your head down, Alleman’; keep your head
down, Alleman’,
Last night in the pale moonlight, I saw you, I saw
you;
You were fixing up your barbed wire, when we opened
up rapid fire;
If you ever want to see your dear Germany, keep
your head down, you Alleman’.”

HUNTING THE HUN

The first brigade of the first division got badly mauled there. One battalion has been reported as singing the Canadian National Anthem while waiting to go "over the top." What they did sing was a song which has the singer bewailing that there is "No booze to-day."

After the fighting of April-May-June, 1915, the Canucks were moved to a fairly quiet section of the line. Old Ploegstreet Woods have oft re-echoed to the songs they sang there. One of them is still untruthfully sung. It has a mournful refrain, and these are the words of the ditty:—

"If the Sergeant steals your rum, never mind;
If the Sergeant steals your rum, NEVER MIND;
 (loudly wailed)
He's had a son of a gun of a time, since they chased
 him up the line.
If the Sergeant steals your rum, NEVER MIND.
 (With great feeling and a well simulated air of
 resignation.)

Songs the folks were singing back home began to come to the boys in the trenches about

SOME TRENCH SONGS

that time, and for a while it seemed that the days of the trench song proper had almost departed. There was one faint-hearted attempt at rhythm about the insect pests, and another to immortalise the "Minnie" (Minnenwerfer shell, trench mortar, noiseless in flight, and very destructive), but the minstrel boys came into their own again when the new and old divisions went back again to Ypres. "Blighty" (a word derived from the Hindustani, and having a wide meaning covering wounds, hospitals, home, and Paradise) was much in the mouths of the Canucks, so they sang:—

"Blighty, in dear old Blighty, fair land across the
foam,
Some people call it England, some people call it
home,
But we just call it Blighty, dear land across the sea,
Where Kaiser William hopes some day his hymn of
Hate he'll live to play,
In Blighty, so dear to me."

At the Somme a year ago they had a rollicking song to the air of "Chesapeake Bay,"

HUNTING THE HUN

wherein they told of hunting Fritz to the Hindenberg line, and they still find time to warble parodies and limericks such as;

“There was a young lady of ‘Wipers,’
Who was awfully fond of the pipers.
At the very first sound,
She would follow them round,
In spite of the shells and the snipers.”

And:

“Sing a song of five francs, Tommy feeling dry,
Four and twenty ‘Kamerads’ standing all close by;
When the place was opened, Tommy shouts ‘Hooray,’
Up comes an M. P.,* and orders them away.”

Another typical song the British troops sang was:

“Standing in the trenches on a cold winter’s night,
Aw Gawblimey, ain’t it cold?
Wiring party working and we darn’t show a light,
Aw Gawblimey, ain’t it cold?
Pity the poor old soldier,
Pity the poor young soldier,
Pity the poor old soldier,
Standing in the rain and the cold.

* M.P.—Military Police.

SOME TRENCH SONGS

Going reconnoit'ring on a cold winter's night,
Aw Gawblimey, ain't it cold?
When we meet with Fritzzy then there'll be a fight,
Aw Gawblimey, ain't it cold?
Pity the poor old soldier,
Pity the poor young soldier,
Pity the poor old soldier,
Standing in the rain and the cold.

Burying stiff 'uns on a cold winter's night,
Aw Gawblimey, ain't it cold?
When the big 'un hit 'em, don't they look a sight,
Aw Gawblimey, ain't it cold?
Pity the poor old soldier,
Pity the poor young soldier
Pity the poor old soldier,
Standing in the rain and the cold.

Going back to Blighty on a cold winter's night,
Aw Gawblimey, ain't it cold?
When we get to Blighty, then we'll be all right,
Aw Gawblimey, ain't it cold?
Pity the poor old soldier,
Pity the poor young soldier,
Pity the poor old soldier,
Standing in the rain and the cold."

The popularity of "My Little Grey Home in the West" brought to birth a dismal parody entitled "My Little Wet Home in the Trench," and many other popular songs have

HUNTING THE HUN

had striking parodies composed on them by the singing Britishers in Flanders.

Those songs have saved many a man from nervous exhaustion, they have cheered the wounded, they have been heard by the dying wherever the British Army has grappled the foe, and they have inspired the mildest mannered man with courage abnormal.

Who would not go "over the top" with men who could sing "I Want to Go Home" as they crouched for the charge across No Man's Land. Who would not fight like knights of old when comrades could sing in face of the foe, "Keep your head down, Alleman'."

America's sons in Flanders will fight all the better when they learn the songs which Britain's sons have sung from Ypres to Gallipoli, in Macedonia and Mesopotamia, India and Egypt; on sinking transports at sea, and in shell-torn trenches on land.

He who sings well will fight well. Perhaps the songs of Uncle Sam's soldiers will be most

SOME TRENCH SONGS

heard of when the Allies make their final drive, but the simple songs and parodies of the British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and South African soldier have re-echoed round the world since "Tipperary" took fearless men to heroes' graves in 1914.

CHAPTER XI

BITS OF WAR

ONE of the bravest officers I ever met is the hero of the following story. He was in the front line trenches for the first time, and was very eager to go "over the top." He devoured every story told by the officers in the dugout of their prowess in fighting the Hun. We could all see in his cherubic countenance that he believed everything he was told.

The dugout was rather cramped for space and not at all comfortable, so that when one of the Junior Subs asked him if he would like to take a walk, he readily assented. The hour was about midnight, and the Junior Sub informed him that as soon as he made arrangements with his N.C.O. they would take the desired walk. Arrangements having been

BITS OF WAR

made, our "hero" was informed that all was in readiness, and the little party set out.

Imagine the amazement of Lieutenant F. when the Junior Sub and the N.C.O. climbed out of the front line trench into No Man's Land. Our "hero" whispered these words: "Where are you going? I thought you were going for a walk?" "So we are," replied the Junior Sub. "We are going to take a walk to Fritz's barbed-wire entanglements. Are you afraid to come?" The reply was, "No, but I am just a little disappointed. I thought when you asked me to take a walk that you were going back towards the support line. However, I am not afraid."

He then immediately climbed out, and in his hurry fell into a shell hole just outside of our barbed-wire entanglements. As he fell, he shouted, and with the shout up went some German flares that illuminated their sector of No Man's Land. Before the flares died out, the machine guns of Fritz began to search out the spot. Our hero had sense enough to keep

HUNTING THE HUN

in a shell hole and, after the lights had died down, he heard the voice of the N.C.O. who had crawled on his stomach to the lip of the shell hole, asking him if he had lost anything. He afterwards told me that if he had answered truthfully he would have said "Yes," as his nerve had played him false.

However, he replied, "No, I have not lost anything, but I have found something."

He had by then regained his courage, so he moved like a veteran towards the German wire entanglements. Having accomplished their mission, they returned to our trenches, the Junior Sub and the N.C.O. leading. As they disappeared into the trench, our hero had just got to the shell hole where he had fallen in previously. In his haste to reach the trench, he was caught on the entanglements by one leg, with the result that he was thrown to the ground.

Again he shouted, but this brought a quick reply from the Huns. The flares were sent up and then began a fusilade of machine-gun fire

BITS OF WAR

at our luckless hero, with the result that the baggy part of his breeches was riddled with bullets. But, strange to say, he himself did not receive a scratch.

Eventually he reached the dugout just as a drink was being served to the Junior Sub. Lieutenant F. was asked if he would like a drink, and his reply was, "Certainly I will have one, thank you." As the drink was handed over to him we noticed that he was perspiring very freely. And as he reached over to take it, we all saw that his hand was shaking like a man with the palsy. One of the officers asked him if he was scared. He replied, "You are damned right I'm scared. See what Fritz has done to my breeches!"

During the attack on Vimy Ridge, Number One Platoon, under the command of Lieutenant Clements, who afterwards received the Military Cross for his good work in connection with this attack, was detailed to capture the Volker Tunnel. His men were supplied with electric flashlights, and, in order to distinguish

HUNTING THE HUN

them from the other platoons, they all wore white armlets above their elbows. Their special work was solely to capture the tunnel and to cut all the electric wires, as we suspected that mines had been laid under the various German trenches.

The moment our barrage had lifted from the German front line trench, Lieutenant C. and his men fought their way through this tunnel. In the tunnel he surprised a German officer who was fast asleep. How this officer could have slept through the noise of our barrage was a mystery. We presumed that he must have been intoxicated, or that he had become so accustomed to our usual strafing of their trenches that he did not pay any attention.

Lieutenant C. aroused him out of his sleep by shining his flashlight upon his face. The German officer appeared very much astonished, and informed us, through one of our men who could speak German, that they had been expecting us to attack on the first of April, and as we had not attacked on that date, they

thought that we would not attack until the 15th. He also stated that two regiments of German infantry had been sent up to their support lines to be ready for what they thought our attack on the 15th of April.

At the point of a pistol that was held by a very determined officer, it did not require much persuasion to make the Hun officer disclose where the wires were attached to the mines that would have blown us to "Kingdom Come," although the Germans had evidently thought Vimy Ridge was impregnable. Nevertheless, they had prepared for all eventualities.

I visited this tunnel on April 10th, and as I descended, helped by the constant aid of my flashlight, I came to the nice little, well-furnished room in which the German officer had been surprised. It was forty feet underground.

I followed a passageway about ten feet broad and seven feet high. Every few yards I had to pass over the bodies of dead Germans. There had been fierce hand-to-hand

HUNTING THE HUN

fighting. Our boys had certainly used their bayonets with good effect. Some prisoners had been taken and, strange to say, one of the prisoners had lived in Montreal and had been engaged as a waiter at one of the large hotels. He could speak excellent English, and he informed one of the boys that there were several of his fellow soldiers who had been engaged as waiters in New York and Chicago. But these had all been killed in the tunnel.

As I advanced along the tunnel it became wider and on both sides were two tiers of bunks. Many of these contained the bodies of dead Germans which were placed there in order to make the passageway less congested. Later on these bodies were taken out and reverently interred.

I slept for about two hours that night in one of the lower bunks. In the upper tier above me was the body of a dead German.

The Germans had built this tunnel with two objects in mind: first, to enable them to bring forward reinforcements from the *Zwischen*

Stellung trench to their front line, which was a distance of 560 yards, without exposing them to our observation and artillery fire and, secondly, that they could also withdraw their men from the front and support trenches without suffering any casualties.

The Germans had made every arrangement with a view to the comfort of both their officers and men. Electric light had been generated from Vimy Village. The tunnel could shelter comfortably one battalion. Ventilation shafts ran up from it to the surface, and there were chambers or rooms off the main passageway to serve the purposes of a garrison that might be isolated. Commander's post, telephones, temporary hospital, baths with hot and cold water installation, and depots for ammunition and food were here.

It can readily be seen that the Germans expected to remain on the spot, but our New World troops upset their calculations.

One day on the Western front there was a duel in the air. It looked as if the old days

HUNTING THE HUN

were to come back again, when the armies would cease fighting and watch their respective champions in single combat. This fight resulted in the death of Immelman, at that time Germany's most distinguished aviator.

It was in truth a duel, no chance meeting of men determined to slay one another, but a battle following a regular challenge and fought by prearrangement and without interference from either side. This air battle was witnessed with the deepest interest by the men of both armies who were crouched in the trenches and separated only by a few yards at No Man's Land. The fire of the anti-aircraft gun on both sides was stilled. Captain Ball, the youthful English pilot who was recently killed after a series of winning battles in the air, was the victor. The story of the duel, which was one of the most sensational events of the war, was told in a letter written to me by a friend of mine who was one of the eye witnesses of the fight.

One morning Captain Ball, who was be-

BITS OF WAR

hind our sector, heard that Immelman was opposite. "This is the chance I have been waiting for. I am going to get him," declared Ball. His friends tried to dissuade him by saying the story of Immelman's presence probably was untrue. Ball would not listen. Getting into his machine, he flew over the German lines and dropped a note, which read:

"Captain Immelman:

"I challenge you to a man-to-man fight to take place this afternoon at two o'clock. I will meet you over the German lines. Have your anti-aircraft guns withhold their fire while we decide which is the better man. The British guns will be silent.

"(Signed) Ball."

About an hour afterwards a German airman swung out across our lines and dropped Immelman's answer:

"Captain Ball:

"Your challenge is accepted. The German

HUNTING THE HUN

guns will not interfere. I will meet you promptly at two.

“(Signed) Immelman.”

Just a few minutes before two, the guns on both sides ceased firing. It was as though the commanding officers had ordered a truce. Long rows of heads popped up and all eyes watched Captain Ball from behind the British lines go off into the air. A minute or two later Immelman's machine was also seen in the air.

The machines ascended in a wide circle. There were wild cheers on both sides, each for the respective champion. Captain Ball, thousands of feet above us and only a speck in the sky, was doing the craziest things imaginable. Our soldiers' cheers turned to cries of dismay. Ball was below Immelman and was apparently making no effort to get above him and thus gaining the advantage of position. On the contrary he was carelessly swinging around this way and that, attempting, it seemed, to postpone the inevitable.

BITS OF WAR

We saw the German's machine dip over preparatory to starting a nose dive. "O Lord, he's gone now," cried a young soldier at my side, for he knew Immelman's gun would start its raking fire once it was being driven straight down.

Then, in less time than it takes to tell, the tables were turned. Before Immelman's plane could get into firing position, Captain Ball drove his machine into a loop. Getting above his adversary and cutting loose with his gun, he smashed Immelman by a hail of bullets as he swept by. Immelman's aeroplane burst into flames and dropped. Ball, from above, followed for a few hundred feet and then straightened out and raced for home. He settled down, rose again, and hurried back to release a huge wreath of flowers almost directly over the spot where Immelman's charred body was being lifted from a tangled mass of metal.

Four days later Captain Ball was killed. He attacked, single-handed, four Germans. One

HUNTING THE HUN

he had shot down. As he pursued the other three two machines dropped from behind the clouds and closed in on him. He was pocketed and killed, but not until he had shot down two more of the enemy.

You can never judge his ability as a fighter from a man's appearance. Private Davis was a runner, about 26 years of age, attached to my company headquarters. He was a small and unassuming man, very neat in his appearance and always spick and span, even in the trenches. His companions often wondered how he could manage to keep himself so clean and tidy.

One night Davis, being near company headquarters, overheard the officers discussing an intended raid on a German machine-gun emplacement, which we thought was a short distance in front of the German trenches. This machine gun had caused quite a number of casualties in our company, so this raid was made with the object of finding and destroying it. Davis begged very hard to be allowed to

BITS OF WAR

go with a patrol party that was being sent out, so the company commander gave his assent.

That night Davis was out in No Man's Land on patrol duty, the patrol consisting of four men under one N.C.O. Later on the patrol came back without having seen anything of the enemy in No Man's Land, but Private Davis was reported missing by the sergeant. About an hour after the return of the patrol, one of the officers who was on duty at the time was called by a sentry who had heard the whistle that had been prearranged for the patrol party's signal as they approached our barbed-wire entanglements.

There in front of our wire were several Germans, with their hands up. All the boys on the fire step had their rifles to their shoulders in an instant. Then we heard a shout, "I have got six Heinies, don't shoot."

It was Davis. I got out of the trench and showed the way through the barbed wire to the Huns, who looked scared to death. There was

HUNTING THE HUN

Davis behind the Boches, with a Mills bomb and pistol in his hands.

He told me that he had got lost. He had then prowled around and surprised this machine-gun squad, who were outside a concrete machine gun emplacement.

I asked Davis how he had managed to capture these men and he told me it was quite easy. "I just put the fear of God into them with my Mills bomb and made them walk in front of me." As he could speak a little German, he told them that at the least noise they made he would blow them to pieces. After that it was a cinch, as he expressed himself.

Davis was very much surprised when he was recommended and received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for this good piece of work. His one regret seemed to be that he was unable to place the machine gun *hors de combat*. He declared that the reason for this was that his prisoners were not gentlemen, and he, therefore, could not trust them to stand quietly

by while he was destroying one of the Kaiser's machine guns.

Many people have had things to say of the French Canadians in Canada and their reasons for not having enlisted more freely. I wish to set down what I observed of the 22nd French Canadian Battalion, which is the only complete French Canadian battalion at the front, although there are quite a number of French Canadians mixed among the English-speaking battalions.

The 22nd French Canadian Battalion was absolutely fearless, coming second to none for their bravery. A few days after the Canadians had captured Vimy Ridge, the 22nd Battalion was detailed to take up its position in the front line of our brigade frontage, my battalion being in support at that time. Both of these trenches had been captured from the Germans. The 22nd battalion sector of the line at that particular time was named the "Observation Trench." It ran in a serpentine manner down the eastern slope of the Ridge. The Ridge at

HUNTING THE HUN

this point dropped abruptly, and the trench was dug through chalk. The Germans must have worked very hard to dig it. Along the sides were quite a number of very deep dug-outs. At about 7:30 P.M., just as it was commencing to get dark, we saw on the crest of the Ridge the 22nd ahead of us. The Huns were at that time about one mile away. Their artillery was still further back, yet with their powerful glasses they could see very well, and they must have seen the 22nd, because there immediately began a rain of shrapnel over them as they were going down the slope of the Ridge in single file. It took some time for the last of the boys to get under cover.

We could not help but admire them as they moved along, as cool as if on parade. None of them showed the least sign of fear or nervousness, although shells were dropping and bursting all around them. It was with a sigh of relief that we saw the last man go over the crest and get under cover of the

trench. We were always sure of the 22nd's doing the right thing at the right time.

Another time they were occupying a sector of the front line not far from Loos. An English battalion, which had previously occupied this sector of the line, informed us that there was a rumour to the effect that a part of the trench we were occupying had been mined by the Germans. This information was far from pleasant, as one does not relish the idea of being blown skywards. The relieving troops are given all useful information concerning enemy movements, etc., hence this mine story.

As we were "standing to" about an hour before dawn we heard a hissing sound, then a roar, and the earth seemed to tremble. All at once the ground opened and earth and debris of all descriptions went flying through the air. The Huns had exploded the mine, but, fortunately for us, they had miscalculated the distance. About one minute after, a barrage was laid by the Germans on our support lines.

HUNTING THE HUN

They had evidently thought that they had blown up our front line sector and us along with it.

The mine had actually exploded a few yards in front of the 22nd French Canadian Battalion. The Huns followed on some distance back of their barrage and advanced in columns of fours to the sector occupied by the French Canadians. The leading sections of the Germans were protected by armour plate over their bodies. As they advanced they were firing their rifles from their hips. The French Canadians stood fast, and at once began a rapid machine-gun and rifle fire, which caused the Huns to retire at a terrible cost. Our barrage also had begun to play, both on their artillery and the advancing troops.

Great praise is due the 22nd Battalion for the manner in which they withstood the Huns. I wish we had in France more French Canadian troops from the Province of Quebec of the same calibre. Their officers are absolutely fearless, and they have one of the highest rec-

BITS OF WAR

ords of efficiency, which can be judged by the distinction conferred on them. They were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Tremblay, D.S.O. and Legion of Honour. Some of the senior officers were Major Debuc, Major Chasse, Major John Roy. All of the foregoing have been decorated by the King with the D.S.O. and Military Cross, and by the French Army with the Legion of Honour. Major John Roy, during the attack on Lens, August 15th, 1917, was in charge of a company when all his junior officers were either killed or wounded. He, with a mere handful of men, held a sector of the front line under a heavy bombardment from the Boche, which continued for two days and nights. I was in the same attack, and in one day alone we repulsed four counter-attacks.

On my return to Canada I was surprised at the people that do not seem to realise how much the 22nd Battalion is thought of by the fighting men in France. Any child who has a father, any mother who has a son, or any

HUNTING THE HUN

person who has a relative in the 22nd French Canadian Battalion should be very proud of it.

The French Canadian is patriotic without doubt. But they are so very clannish on account of their language, many being unable to speak English, that, when volunteers were called for by Canada, their proportion of enlistment was small in comparison with the English-speaking Canadian. A few leaders who could talk well started a propaganda against enlistment, probably for their own personal reasons. These leaders quickly had a great number of followers. But, my personal opinion is, that the war situation had not been presented to the majority of the French Canadians ere these propagandists got in their villainous work.

One night, as we were "standing to" in the front line, the usual whistle of the shells as they passed above us could be plainly heard. I noticed a soldier advancing along my left flank. As he reached the place where I was standing on the fire step I recognised him as Private Wagner.

He was about to pass me. I stopped and asked him where he was going. His reply was, "Sir, I am going over to the right to get my entrenching tool. I left it in a funk hole this afternoon and came away and forgot it." He then saluted and smiled as he was doing so. Somehow or other I did not like the way he smiled. But I had no reason to doubt his words. Although it was strictly against orders to allow anyone to leave the fire step at "stand to," Wagner was personally known to me, so I let him go.

My mind went back to the time I first met him, five years ago. We were both living at the same hotel in Montreal. Wagner was supposed to be an Englishman, and at that time he was a draughtsman in the employ of a large bridge company. It was said that he was one of the finest draughtsmen in Canada on bridge construction work, and he appeared to have a thorough knowledge of the whole of the country, as he had worked for various companies throughout Canada. Wagner mixed

HUNTING THE HUN

with the best of society in Montreal, but it was remarked that before the war his best friends appeared to be connected with the Hamburg-American Steamship Line. When war was declared he was the first man to disclaim any friendship existing between himself and anyone with a German name. No one appeared to hate the Germans more than he did, neither was there anyone more keen to enlist. But the medical examinations at the early stages of the war were so strict that he was rejected by the medical boards.

Wagner and I were often seated together at the same table, and, as he had travelled extensively, he was a very interesting and entertaining man, so we became very friendly.

Later on, when I received my commission he seemed to profess more friendship for me than ever before. His knowledge of military engineering and signalling interested me very much. He was also a clever linguist, speaking several languages fluently.

Being on leave one week-end from camp, I

BITS OF WAR

went into the dining-room of my hotel in Montreal to take lunch; and who should I see but Wagner. He was seated at the table in the same old place. I noticed he was in uniform. As I entered the dining-room he rose from his seat. I told him to sit down. He then told me he had just been passed by the medical board, as the soldiers' standard had been lowered. He appeared to be very pleased at having got through, and he said he hoped that it would not be long until he would be with the boys "Over There."

Just then a lady came into the dining-room. She was a German whom we both knew, married to a Canadian. As she passed us to get to her dining table, he said to me, "How I hate those Germans! The authorities ought to intern them all. If I had my way I would shoot them all, as I would any enemy of ours." He put great emphasis on the word "ours" and his eyes glared malevolently. Although I attached no importance to this little incident at that time, it now came back to my memory.

HUNTING THE HUN

Wagner quickly recovered from his ugly mood and asked me when I thought some of the troops would be sailing. I told him I did not know as we were not given any information with regard to the sailing of our troops. After this I lost track of Wagner until I arrived at my reserve battalion in England.

One day I happened to be going to the battalion orderly room, and who should be on sentry duty, much to my surprise, but Wagner. He saluted me. I returned his salute. After saying a few formal words, I passed into the orderly room. The adjutant said to me, during the course of our conversation, that he had a man whom he would like to promote for the time he would be at the training depot. I asked him the man's name and he told me it was Wagner. I then informed the adjutant that I had known Wagner for some years in Montreal and that in my opinion he would be a well-qualified man to make a non-commissioned officer.

That night about nine o'clock there was a

BITS OF WAR

knock at my hut door. I opened it and saw a sergeant with a man. The sergeant said, "Sir, Private Wagner would like to speak to you." I told the sergeant that he could go and that I would speak to Private Wagner alone. Wagner informed me that he was, to use the slang expression, "fed up" with camp life and that he wanted to get over to France with the first draft. He begged of me to see that his name was placed on the list. This I did for him and later on he left the reserve battalion two months before I reached France.

When I reached my fighting unit in France I was very much surprised to see Wagner working in the battalion orderly room. He seemed surprised and also pleased to meet me, and asked me if I would have him transferred to my platoon, which I did.

He told me if at any time I had to draw a cross section of a map, which is often done by us when we intend attacking a German position, he would be pleased to do it for me. Although I knew he could make an excellent

HUNTING THE HUN

sketch, I thought it would not be a wise thing to allow any of the men under me to know too much of our plans in case they should be taken prisoners by the Germans.

As I pondered over the past history of what I knew of this man, it all came vividly back to my mind. His smile as he saluted and passed along to the right to get his entrenching tool and the manner that he had said "enemy of ours" in the dining-room in Montreal. Suddenly on our right flank the Germans began to send up some red rockets and then a few golden sprays. Word was passed along to send up our S. O. S. I asked who had sent the message. The man to my right said he did not know. I then jumped out of the trench and walked along the parados. I found that five men from my right had received this message and the sixth man was Wagner, and the man next to him did not know anything about it. We act quickly at the front; we take no chances. I interrogated Wagner, but he disclaimed any knowledge of the message.

BITS OF WAR

I was not satisfied with this answer. Although I had known him so long, the various little incidents which had transpired during our association now firmly convinced me that he was a German. I immediately placed him under arrest with a strong guard over him, although I may say that I felt like killing him on the spot.

If we had sent up our S. O. S. signal our artillery would have placed an intense bombardment on the German trenches along our sector of the line. While our artillery were busy shelling in this locality, the Germans would have attacked another point, where they would have encountered less opposition of artillery and in all probability broken through our line. It was a well-arranged scheme; but it failed, thank God.

As soon as we stood down I had Wagner brought to my company commander. I made out a written report, detailing the whole circumstances of the affair. Wagner was searched and in the heel of a boot that he

HUNTING THE HUN

was wearing was found some very thin tissue paper, neatly folded. It did not appear to have any writing on it, but as we laid the paper on a small box in the company headquarters dugout, a candle was burning brightly, so we held it close to the light. We could make out a drawing of our trench. Apparently invisible ink had been used. As we continued to hold the paper before the candle, German writing gradually came to view.

Judging from the expression on Wagner's face you would not have thought that his life was at stake. He appeared to be quite resigned to the fate that awaited him.

It is customary for the army to have carrier pigeons. The pigeons are kept at certain points some distance in the back area of the trenches, where they are kept in large cotes until required by any particular unit. It sometimes happens that a company commander may require two pigeons to take with him into the trenches in order to send messages back to the rear. The message is fastened to



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

RELEASING A PIGEON WITH A MESSAGE FOR HELP



BITS OF WAR

the leg of the pigeon, and when the pigeon arrives at the cotes the message is taken off its leg and handed over to the signallers, who transmit the message to the proper authorities by wire or motor despatch riders.

One man was allotted to carry the pigeons in a small wooden box. This man was always Wagner. He professed to love birds and had taken a course to train pigeons. Whenever our battalion was out at rest, if in a town, Wagner was sure to be away after drill hours. Seldom was he seen at the Y. M. C. A., nor did he ever appear to write any letters. We discovered that he had confederates in some of these little villages where he procured German pigeons, and, no doubt, by some means he exchanged these pigeons and sent important messages occasionally to the enemy.

No doubt Wagner had warned the Huns when they were massing in the sunken road that we were aware of it and were prepared to surprise them.

HUNTING THE HUN

Wagner was sent out of the line under escort. As he passed me he gave a very malevolent stare. He was duly shot at sunrise. Another-crafty Hun paid the penalty of his treachery.

CHAPTER XII

TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB

WHILST we were practicing going over the tapes at Masnil Bouche for the attack on Vimy Ridge, we noticed that after we had finished our practice an Imperial battalion would follow on after us. It was rumoured that it was a London County battalion. We never had any chance to speak to any of the officers or men, so we nicknamed them the "Silent Battalion." Later on, when we had consolidated our positions after the attack, this battalion went over our heads and secured a position somewhere in front of us. We could see by the way that they went about their work that they were very efficient. On the morning of the attack I met the battalion sergeant major of this battalion in the *Zwischen Stellung* trench. He was then leading

HUNTING THE HUN

a platoon. He informed me that the platoon officer had been killed and that he was placed in charge of this platoon. Later on I was informed that this sergeant major was also killed just as he reached his final objective.

You never hear much of the English battalions nor of their doings at the front, but from my own personal experiences of the Imperial battalion every Canadian soldier feels like taking off his hat to the British Tommy. He is ever cheerful under all circumstances, and the wit of the cockney soldier is something to remember. One incident that was brought to my mind of the bravery of the British Imperial troops was when the foe broke through at Cambrai. Three platoons of the 17th Royal Fusiliers and one company of the 13th Essex died facing the enemy. The Fusiliers were withdrawing from an advanced sap when the enemy attack suddenly developed. Captain W. N. Stone of the Fusiliers, a company commander, elected to stay behind with one of the junior officers in charge of the rear guard.

TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB

The little force held off the whole of the German attack until the main position was fully organised. They died to a man, with their faces to the foe. The company of the Essex regiment becoming isolated and realising the improbability of being extricated, held a council of war, at which it was unanimously determined to fight to the last and have no surrender.

Two runners who succeeded in getting through were sent back to notify the battalion headquarters of this decision. Throughout the night of November 30th many efforts were made to effect the relief of these brave men, but all attempts failed against the overwhelming strength of the enemy. The last that is known of this gallant company is that they were fighting it out and maintaining to the last bulwark their stand against the tide of attacking Germans. It is impossible to estimate the value of this magnificent fight to the death, which relieved the pressure on the main line of defence.

HUNTING THE HUN

In the present great battle now waging in France and Flanders the Imperial troops have been fighting continuously day after day for about one month. You can well imagine how tired these men are as they stagger forward or fight rear guard actions to hold the Huns at bay. Battalion after battalion are being overwhelmed with greatly outnumbered forces of the Germans, but they fight on with their backs to the wall. The Gloucester Regiment is allowed to wear the cap badge on both back and front of their caps, as in previous campaigns they fought the enemy, when surrounded, back to back. They are now fighting the Huns in a similar manner. It is hard to pick out one regiment above the other in this great war as English, Irish, Scotch and Welsh have all been doing heroic deeds that shall live for ever in history.

When this great war is ended the American troops will hold a very high opinion of the Allied forces fighting on the Western front,

TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB

which will do more to unite the English-speaking races.

We often hear the statement "So and So has a bomb-proof job." This is the term that is given to officers and men who do not go into the line. There are many jobs of this nature. First of all the medical officer is supposed to have a bomb-proof job, although in many instances medical officers have gone out into No Man's Land to attend the wounded and have lost their own lives in doing so. Then again comes the Chaplain or Padre. He is supposed to have a bomb-proof job, but there are many instances where these brave chaplains and priests have gone "over the top" and lost their lives.

Town majors have a fairly good bomb-proof job, although sometimes when the village or town over which they have control is within the danger zone and the village liable itself to be shelled, their job is not exactly bomb-proof. This job is usually given to an officer who has been up the line and is rewarded for

HUNTING THE HUN

his length of service by this appointment. He usually has a small staff under him of probably four or five men—it all depends upon the size and importance of the village, town or city. He is looked upon as a big man of the army in these places, as he has the awarding of all the billets for both officers and men.

If the town major is within ten miles of the German trenches you will usually find in his office a bell or horns which he has sounded in case of a German gas attack. On the whole his work is not hard, and both he and his staff have no reason to complain of anything on account of the war.

A railway transport officer is also supposed to have a bomb-proof job, although he must be on duty all hours of the day and night to attend to the troops as they entrain and detrain. It is his duty to see that the French authorities have sufficient accommodation in the way of either box or passenger cars for the troops and to arrange all matters pertaining to railway transportation of same.

TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB

He is kept very busy and has little time to "swank."

The divisional gas officer has a nice position, although he may be in the danger zone. He has quite a number of men under him who know their jobs thoroughly, so he is seldom overworked.

The officer in charge of divisional baths has also a nice appointment. His work is important. He is usually in the danger zone but has very little work to do about the fighting in the trenches. His chief job is to have everything ready when officers and men come out of the trenches.

The paymasters have a pretty fairly safe job and certainly the men in the line do not begrudge it to them. Everybody likes the paymaster and it is certainly amusing when we are out to rest to see the way that the men try to wile out advances from the paymaster for all kinds of frivolous reasons.

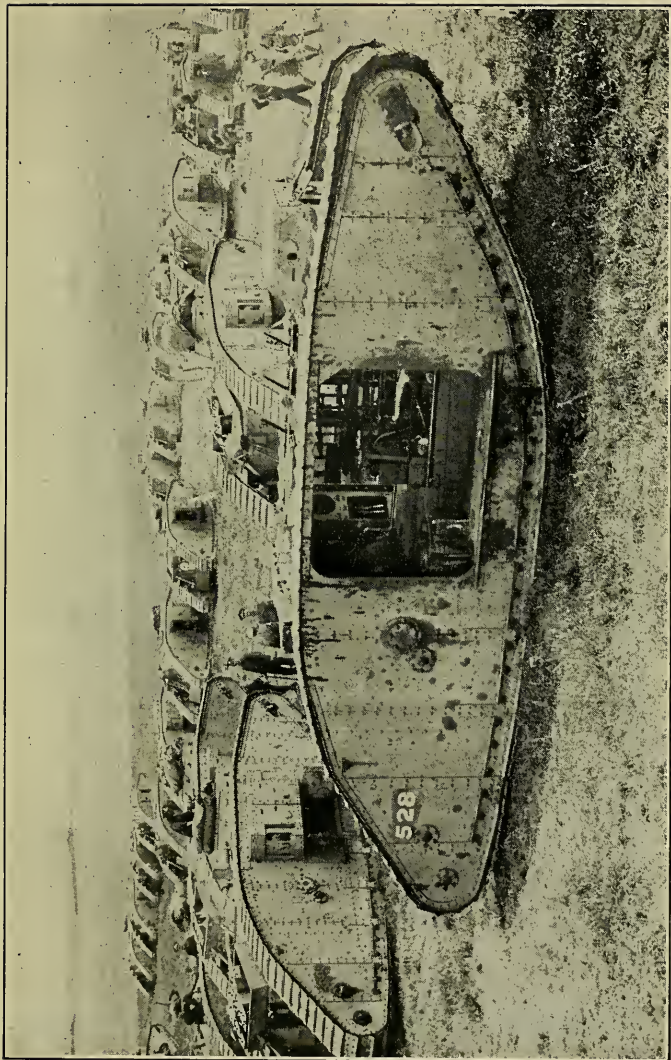
The instructors at the various schools of instruction have all fairly bomb-proof jobs, but

HUNTING THE HUN

these jobs as instructors are usually given after a man has been in the line, although there are instances where probably a specialist in some branch of the service may hold one of these jobs without having to go in the line to secure it.

We now come to the brass hats. This is the term that is used by the Tommy to all staff officers, and their entrance into a trench usually is the forerunner of an advance. So Tommy always looks with a certain amount of suspicion when any staff officer makes a tour of the trenches. Even these staff officers are not always immune, many of them having been killed in the course of their duties.

The A.S.C. (Army Service Corps) are always looked upon as men who have bomb-proof jobs. They are really non-combatant, but many of them have been killed in their line of duty. We now come to the butchers, bakers, cooks, shoemakers and tailors—all of which have bomb-proof jobs. But in the recent attack by the Germans on the Lys Front one of



(Courtesy of the British Pictorial Service)

HOW THE TANKS ARE PARKED IN THE TANKDROMES

TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB

our Major-Generals got together a scratch battalion of these non-combatant men, had them armed with rifles, and they bravely held the line against the advancing Huns.

Railway construction troops were supposed to have bomb-proof jobs, but many of these men have taken up the rifle to assist the infantry when required, and very capable they have proven themselves to be.

The forestry battalions are a non-combatant corps and their job can be described as a bomb-proof job, although the work they do is very essential to the forces in the field.

Bomb-proof jobs are few and far between in France, although in the various Base headquarters the orderly room clerks, etc., have all bomb-proof jobs. These are about the only men who have them.

We had an elderly man in our battalion who had gained the D.C.M. (Distinguished Conduct Medal) for bravery on the field. Our commanding officer, hearing that Brigade Headquarters wanted a man to repair tanks,

HUNTING THE HUN

recommended our D.C.M. for this job, as he thought it would be a fairly safe one. Later on, as I was leaving the trenches with my platoon to go into billets, I came across a party struggling with a tank that had broken down. An officer was outside trying to prop it up. I halted my party and asked him if we could render any assistance, for we were all curious to see the inside of the tank. The assistance was readily accepted and we got busy right away. It was not long until we had overcome the difficulty. The officer, I may say, who was in charge of the tank was not in the best of humours, as he had been getting shelled, and informed me that when shrapnel burst they all had to get inside the tank for safety. I asked him what kind of a tank it was, a male or a female, and he replied to my question by saying, "You know damn well what it is; it is one of those things that always gives us poor men trouble." I often wonder if he was a woman hater. The female tanks are armed with Lewis machine guns, and the male tank is supplied

TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB

with guns of a heavier calibre. The tank officer also informed me that he had one of our men with him. I asked him who it was and he called out of the tank our worthy D.C.M.

I asked Johnson how he liked his job. He told me it was fine. All he had to do in an attack was to run in front of the tank and pick up the dead or wounded and put them to one side. Not much of a bomb-proof job at that!

Our commanding officer had thought that, when he was recommending this man for a job to repair tanks, this was for tanks that were stationary such as water tanks and gas tanks. However, Johnson was quite satisfied with his job.

All officers and men are allowed after an average of eight months' service in the trenches from seven to ten days' leave, although in a great many cases I have known both officers and men to go for over a year before they received leave. It just depends on whether or not there is urgent need for their services at the time.

HUNTING THE HUN

A soldier going on leave to England is usually given a check for 20 pounds (one hundred dollars) and fifty francs (\$10.00). If they decide to spend their leave in France they receive six hundred francs (\$125.00). Transportation to their destination and back is provided by the Government.

When an officer or man goes on leave, he is naturally very keen to get off. I remember one instance of an officer who had been married just a few months before war was declared. Later on he had a picture sent to him of his wife and first born baby. He was naturally very excited, and kept showing the same to everybody he came in contact with.

I believe he thought it was the only baby in the world. He asked me what I thought about it. I told him that the baby was just like him, but I think I had a great deal to answer for in doing so, for the child, apparently about two weeks old, was a little pudgy thing. His features can only be discerned by those who own it. Later on when this officer was granted

TOWARDS A BOMB-PROOF JOB

leave he was very anxious to get away to see his wife and baby. We had another look at the photograph and one French officer who was with us at the time was tapped on the back by this youthful father, who asked when the French officer was going on leave.

The reply was rather startling and at the same time very pathetic. It was spoken in broken English: "Me no go on leave, me stay to fight." We wondered what lay behind these words, and then this officer pulled a picture out of his pocket. It was a picture of his wife and daughter, the daughter apparently a young girl between 15 and 16 years of age. He then described to us that when he was called to the colours he had been living in Northern France. The town was now occupied by the Germans. His wife and daughter had had to remain behind, and the sequel was that they had been outraged by the Germans and each given birth to a child, whose father was a Hun.

So he had no home to go to and he preferred to remain and fight to avenge the wrong done

HUNTING THE HUN

to his wife and daughter. There are many instances of a similar nature to this in both France and Belgium, and no atrocity that is perpetrated like the foregoing shall ever be forgotten.

CHAPTER XIII

TIPS FOR RECRUITS

THE four best friends of the fighting man are: (1) His rifle; (2) the entrenching tool; (3) the oil sheet; (4) small box respirator (gas mask).

The best thing to do with your rifle is to get an old sock, cut about eight inches from the top part and pull it over the rifle muzzle on to the breech. That will prevent the wet clay from interfering with the working of the bolt. Your entrenching tool is invaluable, for when you have gained a position at night your first duty is to entrench. If you have not got the tool, you would at dawn be caught by the Huns and probably hit.

Your oil sheet is your bed on the damp earth and your umbrella on the march. If your "funk hole" is dry, wrap the sheet tight

HUNTING THE HUN

round your boots. It will help to keep the frost out of your feet. In these days of Hun frightfulness the necessity of the gas mask is obvious.

When beginning the attack, take a rough survey of your direct front, and you will have as you advance the different knolls, hedges, ditches, etc., impressed on your mind. You may be two yards or so away from cover when a shell comes screaming towards you. Then you will find you have time to take cover before it bursts. If there is no cover near, drop flat down, and trust to providence.

Never go back from the enemy shell fire, always go forward. The enemy usually fire six shells and each shot goes further behind you. So by meeting the first shell you can laugh at the other five.

Always try, if possible, to avoid woods, trees and farmhouses. The Germans search them with shell fire. You can tell to fifty yards where the German shells will drop. If you have the misfortune to be hit, make for the

TIPS FOR RECRUITS

nearest cover, and get your comrades to bind your wound. Don't stop to go back to get it dressed, or you will possibly get another wound. Just lie on your cover and wait until the fire slackens.

When you go into a trench for the first time, examine thoroughly the height of the cover in front and don't walk upright if the trench does not protect your head. Lower yourself along the passageway, and rise where you will stand at your loophole.

Take with you a linen bag, about half the size of a pillow-slip, with a loop at the end. It will keep your food clean and is much better than putting it in a dirty haversack.

Shoot to kill. When you go to France, please remember you are not going there to be killed. You are going there to kill your enemy, so try and get some lead home. I am sure that will please you. Don't shoot at nothing. Shoot to hit.

One shot well aimed is worth more than a million sent to the sky. The Germans are

HUNTING THE HUN

simply "fed up," and are sick of the fighting. Their officers drive them to the attack with revolvers. We are led by our officers and many of us go with our own free will to fight the murderers of peaceful people and to secure the future safety of the world for democracy. So forward, boys!

One wonders, when one sees a German face to face, is this really one of those devils who wrought such devastation? For devastation they surely have wrought. You can hardly believe it, for he seems much the same as other soldiers. I can assure you that there is none of that insensate hatred that one hears about out here. We are out to kill. And kill we do, at any and every opportunity. But, when all is done and the battle is over the splendid, universal "soldier spirit" comes all over the men, and we cannot help thinking that Kipling must have been in the firing line when he wrote that "East is East and West is West."

Just to give you some idea of what I mean, the other night four German snipers were

TIPS FOR RECRUITS

shot on our wire. The next night our men went out and brought one in who was near and get-at-able and buried him. They did it with just the same reverence and sadness as they do to our own dear fellows.

I went to look at the grave the next morning and one of the most uncouth men in my company had placed a cross at the head of the grave and had written on it:

“Here lies a German
We don’t know his name,
He died bravely fighting,
For his Fatherland.”

And under that “*Got-mitt-uns*” (sic)—that being the highest effort of all the men at German. Not bad for a blood-thirsty Briton? Really that shows the spirit.

When a soldier is in the trenches, he anxiously awaits news from home. If the people at home do not hear from them at regular intervals, do not let this stop them from writing bright and cheerful letters. There may be

HUNTING THE HUN

reasons why his letters do not reach you regularly. Parcels containing chocolates and cigarettes are always acceptable and as American soldiers like chewing gum, this should also be sent. Light silk or cotton underwear is preferable to the woollen, which harbours the vermin.

Camphor balls placed in a small bag and worn on the chest and back are a preventative to the vermin. They may not keep the vermin away, but this prevents them from worrying you, as it seems to chloroform them.

When a man is killed, if it is at all possible, he is given a proper military burial. A record and number of the grave is kept. Men are specially detailed under the Senior Military Chaplain to place little white crosses which show the number and name of the man, his religion, and date he was killed. This record is kept by the Senior Burial Officer of the corps. If anyone wishes to obtain a photograph of the deceased soldier's grave, they can get same on application to the Senior Burial Officer of whatever corps the soldier was in.

TIPS FOR RECRUITS

The graves are as a rule decorated with flowers by the Nursing Sisters, who frequently go to visit these pretty little burial grounds.

Always carry a stout leather shoelace. In case of an artery's being cut, your comrade or yourself can use it as a tourniquet.

Fifty per cent of our troops do not think of carrying a lace. They trust to providence.

Don't make a noise. Quietness is essential. The enemy is continually throwing up rockets, which enables him to see clearly for a distance of half a mile. When that happens you must at once get down on your stomach as flat as possible. Don't look for a clean spot, drop in water if it is there. If you get a kick from your comrade or you have a nasty fall, don't start to use choice language. If you do, you place your life and that of your comrade in jeopardy.

This is what always happens. The Germans open a bombardment on your front and support trenches. Then there is a lull for a moment. They probably think that you are

HUNTING THE HUN

annihilated, but you are not. You are still smiling. Then their trumpets sound a charge and they come on in heaps with a poor half-hearted cheer.

You must now think of the women and children of Belgium. Think also what would happen to your own if the drunken Germans had them in their grasp. That is the time you come in. Just keep cool, calm, collected, and let your rounds sing merrily about three feet from the ground. You will find the crowds in front of you—or part of them—will go back again all right, sadder, and maybe wiser men.

Remember you are dealing with a scientific, brave, alert and most treacherous foe, who will try to destroy you by fair means or foul, so it is up to you to beat him and get your lead home first. Always be on the alert and when exhausted never despair. There is no need for it. Keep on smiling.

Romance and War

THE SECRET WITNESS

By GEORGE GIBBS, author of "*The Yellow Dove*," etc.

A whirlwind romance of love and war, with a man and a girl entangled in the meshes of two of the world's most ingenious secret service systems.

"A swift-moving, entertaining story with an ingenious plot and plenty of exciting moments."—*The New York Times*.

Illustrated, \$1.50 net

THE YELLOW DOVE

By GEORGE GIBBS.

The secret service in wartime, the theft of cryptic dispatches, the great mystery of the Yellow Dove, a spirited American girl with suitors on both sides, a kidnapping—these are only a few of the alluring ingredients Mr. Gibbs has used in this thrilling novel.

"One of the best plot-stories brought out by the present war."—*The Outlook, New York*.

Illustrated, \$1.35 net

THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE (New Edition)

By STEPHEN CRANE.

This is a new edition of Stephen Crane's masterpiece, with an introduction by Arthur Guy Empey, the author of "*Over the Top*."

This story of a man's behavior in battle has probably never been equaled in a war novel. The author of "*Over the Top*" says: "It is not a story of war. It is war. I have met every one of the characters on the fire-step of the trenches in France."

Semi-flexible red fabrikoid, \$1.00 net

THESE ARE APPLETON BOOKS

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY NEW YORK

By *Amelia E. Barr*

CHRISTINE, A FIFE FISHER GIRL

By AMELIA E. BARR, author of "*An Orkney Maid*," "*Joan*," etc.

The coast of Fife among the Fife fisher-folk is the scene of this story. The every-day hardship of these simple fishermen and women, the beauty and terror of the sea, the strength of the men who daily risk their lives, and the strength of the women who patiently await their return are splendidly drawn from the author's own knowledge of these sturdy, honest people. The love story of Christine who works faithfully at her appointed task is delightful, and the other characters in the story contribute to the beauty and tenderness of it.

"One carries away from this story a pleasant impression of fresh breezes, of a people strong and upright and generally goodhearted. 'Christine, A Fife Fisher Girl' is a novel which will be warmly welcomed by Mrs. Barr's many admirers."—*The New York Times*.

"It is not only one of the best books of the year; it is one of the best in all American fiction."—*The Los Angeles Examiner*.

Colored frontispiece, \$1.50 net

JOAN

By AMELIA E. BARR.

In picturing the character of Joan Mrs. Barr has lavished the wealth of her charm of literary expression. Against the background of the English coal mines she has woven the romance of her heroine's life and love, and of her experiences among the miners during troublesome times.

"Pleasing in its freshness and sincerity."—*The Boston Transcript*.

"The story holds the interest of the reader from the first word to the last."—*The Standard, Chicago*.

Colored frontispiece, \$1.50 net

THESE ARE APPLETON BOOKS

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY . . . NEW YORK

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: JUN 2008

Preservation Technologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 007 693 419 8